THE WORKS OF *DAVID MALLET* Esq;

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MDCCLIX.

ALFRED:

A

MASQUE.

40

A

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE firſt draught of this poem was written for the Lady AUGUSTA's birth-day, by command of the PRINCE of WALES: and acted twice, before his Royal Highneſs, in the garden of Clifden. Mr. THOMSON was joined with me in writing that ſketch. But when, ſeveral years after, I thought of fitting it for a public theatre, I found it would be neceſſary to enlarge the deſign; or rather to plan the whole anew, as well as write moſt of the particular ſcenes over again: and make ALFRED, what he ſhould have been at firſt, the principal figure in his own MASQUE. This I have done; but, according to the preſent diſpoſition of the fable, I was obliged to reject a great deal of what I myſelf had written in the other: neither could I retain, of my friend's part, more than three or four ſingle ſpeeches, and a part of one ſong. I mention this expreſsly; that, whatever faults are found in the preſent performance, they may be charged, as they ought to be, entirely to my account.

ALFRED.

ACTED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL,

IN DRURY-LANE.

The PERSONS represented.

ALFRED.	Mr. *Garrick.*
Earl of DEVON.	Mr. *Lee.*
EDWIN.	Mr. *Burton.*
HERMIT.	Mr. *Berry.*
CORIN.	Mr. *Blakes.*
DANISH King.	Mr. *Sowdon.*
First DANE.	Mr. *Palmer.*
Second DANE.	Mr. *Mozeen.*
ELTRUDA.	Miſs *Bellamy.*
EMMA.	Mrs. *Bennet.*
SHEPHERDESS.	Miſs *Minors.*

The Vocal Parts by

Mrs. CLIVE, Miſs NORRIS, Mr. BEARD, Mr. REINHOLD, Mr. WILDER, Maſter VERNON, &c.

Shepherdeſſes, Soldiers, Attendants, Spirits.

The SCENE *repreſents a Plain, ſurrounded with woods. On one ſide, a cottage; on the other, flocks and herds in diſtant proſpect. A hermit's cave in full view, over-hung with trees, wild and groteſque.*

PROLOGUE.

By JOHN Earl of CORKE.

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

IN arms renown'd, for arts of peace ador'd,
ALFRED, the nation's father, more than lord,
A British *author has preſum'd to draw,*
Struck deep, even now, with reverential awe!
And ſets the godlike figure fair in view—
O may diſcernment find the likeneſs true.
When Daniſh *fury, with wide-waſting hand,*
Had ſpread pale fear, and ravage o'er the land,
This prince ariſing bade confuſion ceaſe;
Bade order ſhine, and bleſt his iſle with peace;
Taught liberal arts to humanize the mind,
And heaven-born ſcience to ſweet freedom join'd.
United thus, the friendly ſiſters ſhone,
And one ſecur'd, while one adorn'd, his throne.
Amidſt theſe honors of his happy reign,
Each Grace and every Muſe compos'd his train:

As grateful ſervants, all exulting ſtrove,
At once to ſpread his fame, and ſhare his love.
To night, if aught of fiction you behold,
Think not, in virtue's cauſe, the bard too bold.
If ever angels from the ſkies deſcend,
It muſt be—truth and freedom to defend.
Thus would our author pleaſe—be it your part,
If not his labors, to approve his heart.
True to his country's, and to honor's cauſe,
He fixes, there, his fame, and your applauſe;
Wiſhes no failing from your ſight to hide,
But, by free BRITONS, *will be freely try'd.*

ALFRED:

A

MASQUE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

CORIN *and* EMMA *appear at the door of their cottage.*

Two SHEPHERDESSES.

First SHEPHERDESS *ſings.*

O PEACE, the faireſt child of heaven,
To whom the ſylvan reign was given,
The vale, the fountain, and the grove,
With every ſofter ſcene of love;
Return, ſweet Peace, to chear the weeping ſwain:
Return, with Eaſe and Pleaſure in thy train.

EMMA, *coming forward.*

Shepherd, 'tis he. Againſt yon aged oak,
Penſive and loſt in thought, he leans his head.

CORIN.

Soft: let us not diſturb him. Gentle EMMA,
Poor tho he be, unfriended and unknown,
My pity waits with reverence on his fortune.
Modeſt of carriage, and of ſpeech moſt gracious,
As if ſome ſaint or angel in diſguiſe
Had grac'd our lowly cottage with his preſence,
He ſteals, I know not how, into the heart,
And makes it pant to ſerve him. Truſt me, Emma,
He is no common man.

EMMA.

Some lord, perhaps,
Or valliant chief, that from our deadly foe,
The haughty, cruel, unbelieving *Dane*,
Seeks ſhelter here.

CORIN.

And ſhelter he ſhall find:
Who loves his country, is my friend and brother.
Behold him well. Fair manhood in it's prime,
Even thro the homely ruſſet that conceals him,
Shines forth, and proves him noble.

EMMA.

'Tis moſt like,
He is not what his preſent fortunes ſpeak him.

But,

But, ah! th'inhuman foe is all around us:
We dare not keep him here.

CORIN.

Thou haſt not weigh'd
Our iſland's force; the deep defence of woods,
Nature's own hand hath planted ſtrong around;
The rough encumbrance of perplexing thorns,
Of intertwining brakes that riſe between,
And choak up every inlet from abroad.
Yet more; beyond this wide-ſurrounding verge,
Two rivers broad and rapid hem us in;
Along whoſe border ſpreads the gulphy pool,
And trembling quagmire to betray the foot
It's treacherous greenſword tempts. One path alone
Winds to this plain, ſo difficult and ſtrait,
My ſingle arm, againſt a band of foes,
Could long, perhaps, defend it.

EMMA.

Yet, my Corin,
Revolve the ſtern decree of that fierce tyrant,
The *Daniſh* king: "Who harbors, or relieves
"An *Engliſh* captain, dies the death of traitors;
"But who their haunts diſcovers, ſhall be ſafe,
"And high rewarded."

CORIN.

Now, juſt heaven forbid,
An *Engliſhman* ſhould ever count for gain
What villainy muſt earn. No: are we poor?
Be honeſty our riches. Are we mean,
And humbly born? The true heart makes us noble.
Theſe hands can toil; can ſow the ground and reap
For thee and thy ſweet babes. Our daily labor
Is daily wealth: it finds us bread and raiment.
Could *Daniſh* gold give more?

EMMA.

Alas the while!
That loyal faith is fled from hall and bower,
To dwell with village-ſwains!

CORIN.

Ah look! behold,
Where Edith, all-abandon'd to deſpair,
Hangs weeping o'er the brook.

Second SHEPHERDESS
advancing ſlowly to ſoft muſic.

Is there not cauſe?

She ſings.

I.

A youth adorn'd with every art,
To warm and win the coldeſt heart,
In ſecret mine poſſeſt:
The morning-bud that faireſt blows,
The vernal oak that ſtraiteſt grows,
His face and ſhape expreſt.

II.

In moving ſounds he told his tale,
Soft as the ſighings of the gale
That wakes the flowery year.
What wonder he could charm with eaſe!
Whom happy Nature form'd to pleaſe,
Whom Love had made ſincere.

III.

At morn he left me—fought, and fell!
The fatal evening heard his knell,
And ſaw the tears I ſhed:
Tears that muſt ever, ever fall;
For ah! no ſighs the paſt recall,
No cries awake the dead!

CORIN.

Unhappy maid! yet not alone in woe;
For look, where our ſad gueſt, like ſome fair tree
Torn from the root by winter's cruel blaſt,
Lies on the ground o'erthrown.

EMMA.

I weep, to ſee it!

CORIN.

Thou haſt a heart ſweet pity loves to dwell in:
But, dry thy tears, and lean on this juſt hope——
If yet to do away his country's ſhame,
To ſerve her bravely on ſome bleſt occaſion;
If for theſe ends this ſtranger ſought our cottage,
The heavenly hoſts are hovering here unſeen,
To guard his ſacred life, and bleſs us all.
But let us hence: he riſes to embrace
His friend, a woodman of the neighbouring dale,
Whom late, as yeſter-evening ſtar aroſe,
At his requeſt I bid to meet him here.

SCENE II.

ALFRED, *Earl of* DEVON.

ALFRED.

How long, juſt Heaven! how long

Shall

Shall war's fell ravage deſolate this land?
All, all is loſt—and Alfred lives to tell it!
Are theſe things ſo? and he without the means
Of great revenge? caſt down below the hope
Of ſuccouring thoſe he weeps for?

DEVON.

Gracious Alfred,
England's laſt hope, whoſe feeling goodneſs ſhews
What angels are; to bear, with ſuch a prince,
The worſt of ills, exile, or chains, or death,
Is happineſs, is glory.

ALFRED.

Ah! look round thee—
That mud-built cottage is thy ſovereign's palace.
Yon hind, whoſe daily toil is all his wealth,
Lodges and feeds him. Are theſe times for flattery?
Or call it praiſe: ſuch gaudy attributes
Would miſbecome our beſt and proudeſt fortunes.
But what are mine? What is this high-priz'd Alfred?
Among ten thouſand wretches moſt undone!
That prince who ſees his country laid in ruins,
His ſubjects periſhing beneath the ſword
Of foreign war; who ſees and cannot ſave them,
Is but ſupreme in miſery!—But on,

Proceed,

Proceed, my lord; compleat the mournful tale,
My griefs broke off.

DEVON.

From yonder heath-clad hill,
Far as my ſtraining eye could ſhoot it's beam
I look'd, and ſaw the progreſs of the foe,
As of ſome tempeſt, ſome devouring tide,
That ruins, without mercy, where it ſpreads.
The riches of the year, the bread of thouſands,
That liberal crown'd our plains from vale to hill,
With intermingled foreſts, temples, towers,
Now ſmoak to heaven, one broad-aſcending cloud!
But oh for pity, on each mountain's height,
Shivering and ſad the pale inhabitants,
Gray-headed age and youth, all ſtood and mark'd
This boundleſs ravage: motionleſs and mute,
With hands to heaven up-rais'd, they ſtood and wept—
My tears attended theirs—

ALFRED.

If this ſad ſight
Could pain thee to ſuch anguiſh, what muſt I
Their king and parent feel?

DEVON.

Sir, be of comfort.

Who

Who has not known ill fortune, never knew
Himſelf, or his own virtue.

ALFRED.

Well—no more—
Complaint is for the vulgar: kings muſt act;
Reſtore a ruin'd ſtate, or periſh with it.
Deſpair ſhall be our ſtrength—

DEVON.

Behold, my lord,
From yonder hazle copſe, who iſſues forth,
And moves this way—A ſtranger—but his look
Speaks haſte and apprehenſion—

ALFRED.

Ha! beyond
My utmoſt hope—'Tis Edwin—

SCENE III.

ALFRED, DEVON, EDWIN.

ALFRED.

Haſt thou aught
Of joyful to impart? or is the ſoul
Of *England* dead indeed?

EDWIN.

My gracious maſter,

This

This journey has been fruitful to our wiſh.
Awak'd, as from the laſt and mortal trance,
That ſoul, we thought extinguiſh'd, lives again.
By me aſſur'd, their ſovereign ſtill ſurvives,
Survives to take due vengeance on thoſe robbers,
Who violate the ſanctity of leagues,
The reverend ſeal of oaths; who baſely broke,
Like midnight-ruffians, on the hour of peace,
And ſtole a victory from men unarm'd;
Of this aſſur'd, your people breathe once more.
The ſpirit of our anceſtors is up!
The ſpirit of the free! and, with one voice
Of happy omen, all demand their king.

ALFRED.

Then, heaven who knows our wrongs will deign to guide
The virtue it inſpires—My lord, how ſound
Theſe tidings in your ears?

DEVON.

As the ſure omen
Of better fate, my heart receives and hails them.
For know, my liege, the fury of thoſe *Danes*,
This laſt dire ſcene of total deſolation,
Will kindle up the flame to ſeven-fold fierceneſs;

New-

New-wing each ſhaft, edge every lifted ſword,
And drive it home——

ALFRED.

Good Edwin, yet inform me,
What numbers have you gather'd? how diſpos'd,
Where poſted them?

EDWIN.

In theſe ſurrounding woods,
Soon as the ſhade of night deſcends to veil them,
A generous few, the veteran hardy gleanings
Of many a well-fought field, all at one hour,
Behind the ruſhy brook from hence due eaſt,
By different paths, and in ſmall parties meet,
Accoutred at all points: and, as I judge,
Their numbers count twelve hundred.

ALFRED.

Ha! twelve hundred—
Incredible—ſoft—let me duly weigh
What I, unhoping, ſcarce believing hear.
Something muſt, now, be done—Ay, that attempt
Is great—but greatly hazardous—why then,
Neceſſity, our plea, muſt juſtify
The deſperate daring her hard law impoſes.
Hear, my brave friends. One caſtle ſtill is ours,

Tho

Tho cloſe begirt and ſhaken by the *Danes*.
Devon, ſpeed thither: find out that cloſe path,
By Edwin's eye and aid, which from the midſt,
The central point of *Kinwith-foreſt* winds
In deep deſcent; and, under ground prolong'd,
Safe in the fortreſs ends.

DEVON.

Suppoſe me there:
What follows this, my lord?

ALFRED.

Be it your part
To animate our brothers of the war,
Thoſe *Engliſhmen*, who yet deſerve that name.
The foe—dwell much on this—by our known weakneſs
Made daring and ſecure, will now the rein
Of diſcipline relax, and to looſe revel
Indulge the midnight-hour. Therefore, at three—
O count the clock with more than lovers' vigilance—
At three, this choſen band ſhall from behind,
Riſing at once with Alfred at their head,
Aſſail the hoſtile camp: while your warm ſally,
That very moment, pours upon it's front.
Hence: and ſucceſs be thine.

DEVON.

DEVON.

On this our purpoſe,
The ſacred cauſe of liberty and vengeance,
Smile, righteous heaven!

ALFRED.

O urge it home, my friend,
That each man's ſword now wears upon it's point
Son, huſband, father, every dearer name!
The preſent age, and laſt poſterity!
Farewell. Edwin, within the hour return,
And find me here.

SCENE IV.

ALFRED.

Ha! day declines apace.
What anxious thoughts, in this wild ſolitude,
My darker hours muſt know? and now the veil
Of evening, o'er theſe murmuring woods around
A lonely horror ſpreads—But ſoft: the breeze
Is dumb! and more than midnight-ſilence reigns!
Why beats my boſom?—Muſic! Shield me, heaven!
Whence ſhould it come?-Hark! now the meaſur'd ſtrains,
In awful ſweetneſs warbling, ſtrike my ſenſe,

As

As if ſome wing'd muſician of the ſky
Touch'd his ethereal harp.

SCENE V.

Solemn muſic is heard at a diſtance. It comes nearer in a full ſymphony: after which a ſingle trumpet ſounds a high and awakening air. Then the following ſtanzas are ſung by two aereal ſpirits.

First SPIRIT.

Hear, Alfred, *father of the ſtate,*
Thy genius heaven's high will declare!
What proves the hero truly great,
Is never, never to deſpair.

Both SPIRITS.

Is never to deſpair.

Second SPIRIT.

Thy hope awake, thy heart expand
With all it's vigor, all it's fires:
Ariſe, and ſave a ſinking land!
Thy country calls and heaven inſpires.

Both SPIRITS.

Earth calls and heaven inſpires.

SCENE VI.

ALFRED.

Am I awake? and is it no illuſion
That heaven thus deigns to look with mercy on me?
Thus, by his miniſters, to chear my heart,
And warm it into hope? But lo! he comes,
Whom angels deign to viſit and inſpire,
The holy ſage, deſcending from his cell
In yon hill's cavern'd ſide: ſweet ſylvan ſcene
Where ſhade and ſilence dwell!

SCENE VII.

ALFRED, HERMIT.

ALFRED.

Thrice happy hermit!
Whom thus the heavenly habitants attend,
Bleſſing thy calm retreat; while ruthleſs war
Fills the polluted land with blood and crimes.
In this extremity of *England*'s fate,
Led by thy ſacred character, I come
For comfort and advice. Say what remains,
What yet remains to ſave our proſtrate country?

Nor

Nor ſcorn this anxious queſtion even from me,
A nameleſs ſtranger.

HERMIT.

Alfred, *England*'s king,
All hail!

ALFRED.

Amazement! in this ruſſet hid,
I deem'd my ſtate beyond diſcovery's reach:
How is it then to thee alone reveal'd?

HERMIT.

Laſt night, when with a draught from that cool fountain
I had my wholeſome ſober ſupper crown'd;
As is my ſtated cuſtom, forth I walk'd
Beneath the ſolemn gloom and glittering ſky,
To feed my ſoul with prayer and meditation.
And thus to inward harmony compos'd,
That ſweeteſt muſic of the grateful heart,
Whoſe each emotion is a ſilent hymn,
I to my couch retired. Strait on mine eyes
A pleaſing ſlumber fell, whoſe myſtic power
Seal'd up my ſenſes, but enlarg'd my ſoul.
Led by thoſe ſpirits, who diſcloſe futurity,
I liv'd thro diſtant ages; felt the virtue,
The great, the glorious paſſions that will fire
Remote poſterity; when guardian laws

Are

Are by the patriot, in the glowing ſenate,
Won from corruption; when th' impatient arm
Of liberty, invincible, ſhall ſcourge
The tyrants of mankind—and when the deep,
Thro all her ſwelling waves, from pole to pole
Shall ſpread the boundleſs empire of thy ſons.
I ſaw thee, Alfred, too—But o'er thy fortunes
Lay clouds impenetrable.

ALFRED.

To heaven's will,
In either fortune, mine ſhall ever bend
With humbleſt reſignation—Yet, O ſay,
Does that unerring Providence, whoſe juſtice
Has bow'd me to the duſt; whoſe miniſters,
Sword, fire and famine, ſcourge this ſinful land,
This tomb of it's inhabitants—does he
Reſerve me in his hand, the glorious inſtrument
From fell oppreſſion to redeem my country?

HERMIT.

What mortal eye, by his immediate beam
Not yet enlighten'd, dare preſume to look
Thro time's abyſs? But ſhould the flatterer hope,
Anticipating ſee that happy time,
Thoſe whiter moments—Prince, remember, then,

The

The noble leſſons by affliction taught:
Preſerve the quick humanity it gives,
The pitying ſocial ſenſe of human weakneſs;
Yet keep thy generous fortitude entire,
The manly heart, that to another's woe
Is tender, as ſuperior to it's own.
Learn to ſubmit: yet learn to conquer fortune.
Attach thee firmly to the virtuous deeds
And offices of life: to life itſelf,
With all it's vain and tranſient joys, ſit looſe.
Chief, let devotion to the ſovereign mind,
A ſteady, chearful, abſolute dependance
On his beſt wiſeſt government, poſſeſs thee.

ALFRED.

I thank thee, father: and O witneſs, heaven,
Whoſe eye the heart's profoundeſt depth explores!
That if not to perform my regal taſk;
To be the common father of my people,
Patron of honor, virtue and religion;
If not to ſhelter uſeful worth, to guard
His well-earn'd portion from the ſons of rapine,
And deal out juſtice with impartial hand;
If not to ſpread, on all good men, thy bounty,
The treaſures truſted to me, not my own;
If not to raiſe anew our *Engliſh* name,

By peaceful arts that grace the land they bleſs,
And generous war to humble proud oppreſſors:
Yet more; if not to build the public weal,
On that firm baſe which can alone reſiſt
Both time and chance, on liberty and laws;
If not for theſe important ends ordain'd,
May I ne'er poorly fill the throne of *England!*

HERMIT.

Still may thy breaſt theſe ſentiments retain,
In proſperous life.

ALFRED.

Could it deſtroy or change
Such thoughts as theſe, proſperity were ruin.

Two SPIRITS *ſing the following hymn.*

FIRST.

O joy of joys, to lighten woe!
Beſt pleaſure, pleaſure to beſtow!
What raptures then his *heart expand,*
Who lives to bleſs a grateful land.

Second SPIRIT.

For him, ten thouſand boſoms beat;
His name conſenting crouds repeat:
From ſoul to ſoul the paſſion runs,
And ſubjects kindle into ſons.

HERMIT.

Alfred; once more—ſince favour'd thus of heaven,
Since thus to cheer thee and confirm thy virtue
He ſends his angels forth—remember well,
Should better days reſtore thy proſperous fortunes,
The vows theſe awful beings hear thee make:
Remember and fulfil them.

ALFRED.

O no more——
When thoſe whom heaven diſtinguiſhes o'er millions,
And ſhowers profuſely power and ſplendor on them,
Whate'er th' expanded heart can wiſh; when they,
Accepting the reward, neglect the duty,
Or worſe, pervert thoſe gifts to deeds of ruin,
Is there a wretch they rule ſo baſe as they?
Guilty, at once, of ſacrilege to heaven!
And of perfidious robbery to man!

HERMIT.

Such thoughts become a monarch—but behold,
The glimmering duſk, involving air and ſky,
Creeps ſlow and ſolemn on. Devotion now,
With eye enraptur'd, as the kindling ſtars
Light, one by one, all heaven into a glow

Of

Of living fire, adores the hand divine,
Who form'd their orbs and pour'd forth glory on them.

ALFRED.

Then, this good moment, ſnatch'd from earth's affairs
In yonder cell let us aright employ:
There, low on earth, as kneeling reverence bids,
To him our homage pay, with heart ſincere,
Who bids affliction hope, and triumph fear:
Who, from the depth of ruin, yet may raiſe
This proſtrate iſle, and bleſs with better days.

The End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

EMMA, *and other peaſants.*

WISH'D evening now is come: but her calm hour,
Cloſe of our daily toil, that wont to ſound
Soft with the ſhepherd's pipe and virgin's voice,
Is chearleſs all and mute.

Second SHEPHERDESS.

Heaven's will be ours.
And ſince no grief can yeſterday recall,
Nor change to morrow's face; now let us ſoothe
The preſent as we may with dance and ſong,
To lighten ſad remembrance.

Firſt SHEPHERDESS *ſings.*

I.

The ſhepherd's plain life,
Without guilt, without ſtrife,
Can only true bleſſings impart.
As nature directs,
That bliſs he expects
From health and from quiet of heart.

Vain

II.

Vain grandeur and power,
Thoſe toys of an hour,
Tho mortals are toiling to find;
Can titles or ſhow
Contentment beſtow?
All happineſs dwells in the mind.

III.

Behold the gay roſe,
How lovely it grows,
Secure in the depth of the vale.
Yon oak, that on high
Aſpires to the ſky,
Both lightning and tempeſt aſſail.

IV.

Then let us the ſnare
Of Ambition beware,
That ſource of vexation and ſmart:
And ſport on the glade,
Or repoſe in the ſhade,
With health and with quiet of heart.

Here a paſtoral dance.

SCENE II.

CORIN, EMMA, PEASANTS.

CORIN.

O happy hour! wife, neighbours—ſuch, ſuch news!
I ſhall run wild with joy!

EMMA.

What can this mean?
Say, ſpeak—

CORIN.

The king! the king is in our iſle!

EMMA.

Can it be poſſible?

PEASANT.

O gracious powers!

CORIN.

As now I paſs'd beneath the hermit's cell,
I heard that man divine pronounce his name.
O Emma, the poor ſtranger whom we ſerv'd
And honor'd, all-unknowing of his ſtate,
Is he! our great and glorious Alfred!

ALL.

Heaven!
Then are we bleſt indeed!

CORIN.

My humble cottage,
Long ages hence, when we are duſt, my friends,
In holy pilgrimage oft viſited,
Will draw true *Engliſh* knees to worſhip there,
As at the ſhrine of ſome propitious ſaint,
Or angel friendly to mankind—The thought
Brings tears into mine eyes.——

EMMA.

Does joy deceive
My ſenſe? or did I hear a diſtant voice
Sigh thro the vale and wake the mournful echo?

The following ſong is ſung by a perſon unſeen.

I.

Ye woods and ye mountains unknown,
Beneath whoſe pale ſhadows I ſtray,
To the breaſt of my charmer alone
Theſe ſighs bid ſweet echo convey.
Wherever he penſively leans,
By fountain, on hill, or in grove,
His heart will explain what ſhe means,
Who ſings both from ſorrow and love.

CORIN.

The evening wood-lark warbles in her voice.
Who can this be?

EMMA.

Peace, peace: ſhe ſings again.

II.

More ſoft than the nightingale's ſong,
O waft the ſad ſound to his ear:
And ſay, tho divided ſo long,
The friend of his boſom is near.
Then tell him what years of delight,
Then tell him what ages of pain,
I felt while I liv'd in his ſight!
I feel till I ſee him again!

CORIN.

What think ye, friends? Such moving, melting ſoftneſs
Breathes in theſe ſweet complainings, as till now
Mine ear was never bleſt with. Let us go
And find out this new wonder.

Second SHEPHERDESS.

Look, the king!

EMMA.

Now, by my holidame, a goodly perſon,
And of moſt noble mien.

CORIN.

Diſturb him not.

SCENE

SCENE III.

ALFRED, HERMIT.

HERMIT.

Your enterpriſe is bold—and may be fatal:
Yet I condemn it not. All is not raſhneſs,
That valor of the common ſize might think
And caution term ſo. Souls of nobler ſcope,
Whoſe comprehenſive ſight beholds at once
And weighs the ſum of things, are their own rule,
And to be judg'd but by themſelves alone.

ALFRED.

Then, in the name of that inſpiring Power,
Whoſe deputy I am, who ſends me forth
His miniſter of vengeance, on I go
To victory, or death.

As he is going out, he ſtops ſhort.

What do I feel?
Save me! a holy horror ſtirs my frame,
And ſhivers thro each vein—What ſhapes are theſe,
Athwart the gloom, that ſtrike my dazled ſenſe?
Betwixt and where yon miſt along the marſh
Rowls blue its vapoury wave, ſome unſeen hand
Pourtrays in air the viſionary ſcene,

Diſtinct and full, in brighter colors drawn
Than ſummer ſuns reflect on evening cloud,
When all it's fluid boſom glows with gold—
And now, it reddens into blood!

HERMIT, *who had obſerved him fixedly, half-aſide.*

Ere night
Withdraws her ſhade, new accidents and ſtrange
Will ſhake this iſland's peace.

To him.

Now, Alfred, now,
Be all the hero ſhewn.

ALFRED.

What may this mean?

SCENE IV.

ALFRED, CORIN.

CORIN *kneeling.*

My honor'd ſovereign—

ALFRED.

How is this? ha! what!
Diſcover'd by this peaſant——Be it ſo:
The plain man is moſt loyal.

CORIN.

CORIN.

England's wealth,
The pearly ſtores her circling ſeas contain,
Should never ſhake your Corin's faith——

ALFRED.

But what
Alarms thee thus?

CORIN.

My fears are for my king.
Some ſtrangers, Sir—their habits ſpeak them *Danes*—
Have found our iſle. Look this way.

ALFRED.

Be of courage.
Now, I perceive them. Thro the evening ſhade
Their armor gleams a faint and moving light.
Weſtward they turn, and ſtrike into the path
That opens on this plain. Retire we, ſhepherd,
Behind yon duſky elm; from whence, unſeen,
We may diſcern their numbers and their purpoſe.

SCENE V.

DANES *paſſing along.*

Firſt DANE.

No more. 'Twas ſhe: I could not be deceiv'd.
A lover's eye is as the eagle's ſharp,

And kens his prey from far—But liſt a while,
If ſound of human voice, or bleat of flocks
May guide our loſt enquiry thro this wild.

Second DANE.

No: all is lonelineſs around, and huſh'd
As our dead northern waſtes at midnight-hour.
Our gods protect us! Prince, it was moſt raſh,
So few our numbers, at this cloſe of day
Headlong to plunge amid theſe horrid ſhades,
Where danger lurks unſeen.

Firſt DANE.

How! know'ſt thou not
That *England* is no more? Her ſons of war,
To dens and caverns fled, like fearful hares
Sit trembling at each blaſt the chill wind blows.
Her king himſelf or ſleeps in duſt, or roams
Wild on the pathleſs mountain. As for me;
Our country-gods, thoſe ſpirits that poſſeſs
The boundleſs wilderneſs, that love to dwell
With dreary ſolitude and night profound,
Will guard the ſon of Ivar, to whoſe houſe
Their vaſſalage is bound by magic ſpell.
Come on. She muſt be found, this unknown fair
Who fir'd me at firſt view; and rages ſtill
A fever in my youthful blood. Away.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

ALFRED, CORIN, *advancing.*

CORIN.

They are but three.

ALFRED.

And were that number trebled,
This iſland is their grave; this ſacred ſpot,
Fair freedom's laſt retreat. We muſt, we will
Preſerve it, all-inviolate and holy,
From impious infidels: or, with our blood,
If now we periſh, ſanctify it's earth
For after-times to viſit and revere.

CORIN.

Liſt, liſt, my lord——

ALFRED.

What noiſe was that?—By heaven,
The ſhrieks of women! Now, ſtern vengeance guide
The ſword we draw.

SCENE VII.

EMMA, *and other peaſants.*

EMMA.

Ah, whither ſhall we fly?

Immortal virgin! queen of mercy! ſave us——
See, ſee, my friends, they ſeize the lovely ſtranger—
They bear her off—Behold, the king appears—
My huſband too—Now, heaven, defend alike
The mighty and the mean, the prince and peaſant!
Two of them fall beneath our monarch's arm—
The third, my Corin—O I dare no more
Look that way—Yet I muſt—The third is ſlain!
O gallant ſhepherd! O moſt happy hour!

SCENE VIII.

ALFRED, CORIN,
ſupporting the lady.

ALFRED.

This way, brave ſhepherd, from theſe cloſer ſhades—
Here the free air and breezy glade will rouſe
Her fainting ſpirits—So—Who may ſhe be?
Perhaps, ſome worthy heart at this ſad moment
Akes for her ſafety.

ELTRUDA.

Save me, ſave me, heaven!

ALFRED.

Ye powers! what do I hear?—Yes—yes—'tis ſhe!
My wife, my queen! the treaſure of my ſoul!

ELTRUDA.

ELTRUDA.

My Alfred!

ALFRED.

My Eltruda!

ELTRUDA.

Can it be?
Or is it all th' illuſion of my fear?
O no: 'tis he—my lord! my life! my huſband!
My guardian-angel Alfred.

ALFRED.

My Eltruda!
Black horror chills me while I view the brink,
The dreadful precipice, on which we ſtood—
And was it thee I reſcu'd from theſe ruffians—
O providence amazing!—thee, Eltruda!

ELTRUDA.

I tremble ſtill!—from worſe than death deliver'd!
And am I then ſecure in Alfred's arms?

ALFRED.

There let me hold thee; lull thy fears to reſt;
There huſh thy ſoul to everlaſting fondneſs.
The panting bird ſo flutters, juſt eſcap'd
The fowler's ſnare.

ELTRUDA.

My heart, my heart is full—
And muſt o'erflow in tears. A thouſand thoughts
Are buſy here—That ever we ſhould meet
In ſuch a dire extremity!—Ah me!
That ever Alfred's family and children
Should need the ſhelter of his ſingle arm!

ALFRED.

My children!—where, where are they?

ELTRUDA.

Turn thine eyes
To yonder cottage: there conceal'd—

ALFRED.

My Corin,
Fly, bring them to my arms. But ſay, my love,
Why didſt thou leave the convent, where I plac'd thee?
Why, unprotected, truſt thee to a land,
A barbarous land, where violence inhabits?
Our hoſpitable *England* is no more!

ELTRUDA.

Alas! my Alfred, even the peaceful cells,
Where ſafe beneath devotion's holy veil
Her cloiſter'd votaries dwelt, from impious *Danes*
No reverence claim. The villages around,
Diſpers'd and flying wild before their arms,
Inform'd

Inform'd us, a near party, on whoſe courſe
Deſtruction waits, were marching full to us.
Inſtant I fled. Two faithful ſervants bore
Our children off: and heaven has ſav'd us all!

ALFRED.

O welcome to my ſoul—O happy Alfred!
Thus to have reſcu'd what the feeling heart
Moſt dear and precious holds, from men who war
With earth and heaven.

ELTRUDA.

Tho terrible at firſt,
Bleſt be the tempeſt that has driven me hither,
Into this ſafe, this ſacred harbor!

ALFRED.

Come,
O come, and here repoſe thee from the ſtorm,
Within theſe ſheltering arms.

ELTRUDA, *holding him off.*

Yet—let me view thee—
My king and huſband—do I find thee thus?
falling into his arms.
Unknown! unſerv'd! unhonor'd! none to tend thee!
To ſoothe thy woes, to watch thy broken ſlumbers,
With every fonder ſervice, pious love

Beſt

Beſt knows to pay!—There is in love a power,
There is a ſoft divinity that draws,
Even from diſtreſs, thoſe tranſports that delight
The breaſt they pain, and raiſe it's nobleſt powers
Above all taſte of joys from vulgar life!

ALFRED.

O 'tis too much—thou all that makes life glorious!
Nay, look not on me with this ſweet dejection;
Thro tears that pierce the ſoul——
My children too *!

* BOTH, *kneeling*.

Father and king!

ALFRED.

Come to your ſire's embraces:
'Tis all he can beſtow—In them behold
What human grandeur is—The peaſant's offspring
Have ſome retreat, ſome ſafe, tho lonely home:
But you, my babes, you have no habitation!
With pain and peril wandering thro a land,
A ruin'd country you were born to rule!
The thought unmans my reaſon.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

ALFRED, ELTRUDA, HERMIT.

HERMIT.

I have heard
Thy fond complainings, Alfred.

ALFRED.

You have then,
Good father, heard the cauſe that wrings them from me.

HERMIT.

The human race are ſons of ſorrow born:
And each muſt have his portion. Vulgar minds
Refuſe, or crouch beneath their load: the brave
Bear theirs without repining.

ALFRED.

Who can bear
The ſhaft that wounds him thro an infant's ſide?
When whom we love, to whom we owe protection,
Implore the hand we cannot reach to ſave them.

HERMIT.

Weep not, Eltruda.—Yet, thou art a king!
All private paſſions fall before that name.
Thy ſubjects claim the whole.

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

Can public truſt,
O reverend ſage! deſtroy the ſofter ties
That twine around the parent's yearning heart?
This holy paſſion heaven itſelf infus'd,
And blended with the ſtream that feeds our life:
All nature feels it intimate and deep,
And all her ſons of inſtinct and of reaſon.

HERMIT.

Then ſhew that paſſion in it's nobleſt form.
Think what a taſk it is, to rear thoſe minds,
On whom the fate of millions, general bliſs,
Or univerſal miſery, depends.

ALFRED.

That taſk then, difficult alike and noble,
Be thine, O ſacred ſage; to whoſe try'd wiſdom
I, henceforth, ſolely truſt their tender years.
Let truth and virtue be their earlieſt teachers.
Keep from their ear the ſyren-voice of flattery;
Keep from their eye the harlot-form of vice,
Who ſpread, in every court, their ſilken ſnares,
And charm but to betray. Betimes inſtruct them,
Superior rank demands ſuperior worth;
Pre-eminence of valor, juſtice, mercy:
But chief, that tho exalted o'er mankind,

They

They are themſelves but men—frail ſuffering duſt,
From no one injury of human lot
Exempt; but fever'd by the ſame heat, chill'd
By the ſame cold, torn by the ſame diſeaſe,
That ſcorches, freezes, racks, and kills the beggar.
Should fairer days, returning, ſmile again
On *England* and on me——
Ha! Edwin here?
This way, my friend—ſpeak ſoftly—
Edwin *whiſpers the king aſide.*
How!—'tis well—
Back to thy poſt: I follow on the inſtant—
Yet ſtay—Behold my queen, and infant-ſons!
Edwin—thy king's whole wealth is there ſumm'd up!
Nay, wipe thine eyes: and tell my gallant friends
What thou haſt ſeen. The tale will lend new force
To each man's arm, and with redoubled weight
Urge each deſcending blow. Hence! ſpeed thee well.
Eltruda—we muſt part—

ELTRUDA.

What do I hear?
My life, my love—

ALFRED.

Part for a few ſad moments,
That our next meeting may be long and happy.

EL-

ELTRUDA.

What leave me now? O my preſaging heart!
Already leave me! 'Tis the dreadful call
Of glory, ſomewhat perilouſly great,
And big with urgent haſte, that tears thee from me.
Oh Alfred—

ALFRED.

No fond weakneſs now be ſhewn,
Eltruda, no diſtruſt of virtue's fate.
Thou and thy children are, at preſent, ſafe
In this wiſe hermit's care. For what remains;
My cauſe is juſt, my fortune in his hand
Who reigns ſupreme, almighty and all-good.
* That Power who ſtills the raging of the main,
The rage of all our foes can render vain.
To his unerring will reſign'd ſincere,
I fear that God, and know no other fear!

The End of the Second Act.

* Tranſlated from RACINE's ATHALIE.

Celui, qui met un frein à la fureur des flots,
Sçait auſſi des méchans arreſter les complots.
Soûmis avec reſpect à ſa volonté ſainte,
Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, & n'ay point d'autre crainte.

ACT III. SCENE I.

EMMA, *and other ſhepherdeſſes.*

EMMA.

YES, Edith, we will watch, till morning ſhines,
Around this cottage, now made rich and glorious--
Who durſt have thought ſuch wonders?—by a queen,
And her bright offspring! Thou, mean while, invoke,
With ſounds of ſoothing ſtrain, the gentle ſleep
To pour his timely vapours on their eye-lids.

EDITH *ſings.*

I.

In cooling ſtream, O ſweet repoſe,
Thoſe balmy dews diſtill,
That ſteal the mourner from his woes,
And bid deſpair be ſtill.

II.

Prolong the ſmiling infant's reſt,
Who yet no ſorrow knows:
But O the parent's bleeding breaſt
To ſofteſt peace compoſe!

III.

III.

For her the faireſt dreams adorn,
That wave on fancy's wing;
The purple of aſcending morn,
The bloom of opening ſpring.

IV.

Let all, that ſoothes the ſoul or charms,
Her midnight-hour employ;
Till bleſt again, in Alfred's *arms,*
She wakes to real joy.

EMMA.

Alas! ſhe comes. Let us withdraw, my friends.
Her ſorrows claim all reverence: and 'tis meet
We leave her to herſelf.

SCENE II.

ELTRUDA.

Amid the depth of this ſurrounding gloom,
While nature all is huſh'd, Eltruda wakes
To think—and to be wretched. Oh my love!
My heart's ſole reſt and refuge! Where is he!
Victor or vanquiſh'd—what is now his fate?
Moments of terror—Ha! what noiſe was that?

Each

Each ſound appalls me, and each thought is death!
'Twas more than fancy ſure: it ſeem'd the groan
Of bleeding men—O every guardian wing
Of ſaints and angels ſhield him! from his breaſt
Turn wide the flying ſhaft, the lifted ſteel,
And, ſheltering him, a ruin'd nation ſave.
Who comes? Speak, quickly ſpeak.

SCENE III.

ELTRUDA, *an* ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT.

My gracious miſtreſs,
Why to the breath of this untimely ſky
Expoſe your health?

ELTRUDA.

Away—the health, the life
Of *England* is at ſtake: my Alfred fights—
Perhaps he bleeds: and I am loſt for ever!
But is there none, no meſſenger return'd
From that dark ſcene of death?

ATTENDANT.

No, madam, none.

ELTRUDA.

O my torn, tortur'd heart! What is the hour?

ATTENDANT.

By yon faint light, that glimmering ſteals along
From eaſt to north, I gueſs the morning near.

ELTRUDA.

Then all my hopes and fears ſuſpended hang
On this dread moment's wing—Ah! hear'ſt thou not
The trumpet's diſtant voice?

ATTENDANT.

It ſpeaks aloud,
And ſhakes the echoing woods.

SCENE IV.

ELTRUDA, ATTENDANT, EMMA, *and others.*

EMMA.

O mighty queen,
They come, the murderers come. Protect us, heaven,
kneeling.
Our huſbands, and our infants, from their rage!
Without thine aid we periſh.

ELTRUDA.

O my ſoul!
Why what a ſight is this? A tyrant's eye
Might melt with pity o'er it. Thou ſupreme,
kneeling.
All-

All-ruling arbiter of human fate,
Whoſe univerſal family is nature!
On Alfred, on his children, on his people,
Look down with mercy —for their cauſe is thine,
And now, even now, deciding!

SCENE V.

HERMIT, ELTRUDA, *and others.*

HERMIT.

Glorious princeſs!
This is indeed to reign. Comfort, great queen:
It comes, it comes! the promis'd ſcene diſcloſes!
I ſee the *Daniſh* raven droop his wing!
See *England*'s genius ſoar again to heaven,
And better days in white ſucceſſion roll,
Without a cloud between!

The clouds break away; and on the edge of a rock, in full view, a ſpirit is ſeen amidſt a blaze of light, who ſings the following

ODE.

From thoſe eternal regions bright,
Where ſuns that never ſet in night,
Diffuſe the golden day;
Where ſpring, unfading, pours around,
O'er all the dew-impearled ground,
Her thouſand colors gay;
The meſſenger of heaven's high King,
I come; and happy tidings bring,
To chear this drooping iſle:
Behold her cruel foes are fled!
Behold fair freedom lifts the head,
And all his children ſmile!
The dawn, that now unveils her ſkies,
Sees England's *future glory riſe:*
A better age is born!
Then, let each voice of ſprightly ſtrain,
Around from warbling hill and plain,
Hail this triumphant morn!

Grand CHORUS.

Then let each voice of ſprightly ſtrain,
Around from warbling hill and plain,
Hail this triumphant morn!

SCENE

SCENE VI.

ELTRUDA, HERMIT, *Earl of* DEVON.

DEVON, *kneeling.*

Succeſs is ours—

ELTRUDA.

The king, my lord—

DEVON.

Returns,
Victorious and unhurt.

ELTRUDA.

Then, firſt, to heaven,
For this beſt news I humbly bend the knee
In grateful adoration.—Now proceed,
My lord; and leave no circumſtance untold
Of this amazing night.

DEVON.

Her miſty ſhade
Had now enclos'd us round; when, led ſecure
By Edwin's eye, the darkeſt depth I reach'd
Of *Kinwith-wood.* We parted —He, in haſte,
Back to his charge. I thro the cavern'd path,
Whoſe inlet there is found, deſcending dark;
Long, under ground, it's ſolitary maze

Purſu'd as beſt I could; and roſe at length
Safe in the fort our foes had cloſe begirt.
'Twas joy, 'twas rapture there, among the few
Who wiſh'd, not hop'd, my unforeſeen return.

ELTRUDA.

What follow'd this, my lord?

DEVON.

Prepare, I cry'd,
To live or die like men. Our king ſurvives;
And, now in arms, expects your inſtant aid.
To him then let us cut our glorious way
Thro yonder camp: or, if we nobly fall,
There offer to the genius of our country
Whole hecatombs of *Danes*.—As if one ſoul
Had mov'd them all, around their heads they whirl'd
Their ſounding faulchions—"Lead us to thoſe *Danes*:
Revenge and *England*"—was the general cry.

ELTRUDA.

I feel it here: my heart applauds their virtue.
How was this follow'd on?

DEVON.

To ſouls reſolv'd
Small preparation needs—The clock ſtruck three—
At once our gates flew wide: at once we ruſh'd
Prone on the *Daniſh* trenches—While behind,

Juſt

Juſt to the fatal inſtant, Alfred roſe
In all his terrors; o'er the mounded camp
Tempeſtuous drove; from ſpace to ſpace along
Spred ſlaughter and diſmay. Nor reſt, nor pauſe:
Back'd by his ardent band, right on he bore
Even to the tent, where ſunk in ſleep profound
The *Daniſh* monarch lay. His guards, a few
Whom honor prompted to defend their prince,
Fell round him. He yet lives: but, O dire chance
Of cruel war!—a priſoner and in chains.

ELTRUDA.

A fall how terrible! My breaſt is thrill'd,
And in the fierce barbarian mourns the captive.

HERMIT.

Such fortune ever wait on wild ambition!
On war unjuſt that deſolates whole nations,
And leaves a world in tears for one man's guilt!
But yet—fallen as he is—he knows not yet
What new diſtreſs, what keener pangs attend
To wound his inmoſt heart—That trumpet ſpeaks
The king's approach—Ye miniſters unſeen!

Spirits, whom the King of kings
Gives to watch o'er human things,
Hither, from each bleſt abode:
From the morning's purple road;
From the ſolar world of light;
From the planet of the night;
From the rainbow's evening-round;
From the blue horizon's bound;
Hither, borne thro ſeas of air,
Sons of life and love repair!
And now, with all that charms the eye,
This monarch's triumph dignify.

SCENE VII.

To a grand flouriſh of inſtruments, the ſcene, gradually opening, diſcovers ſeveral triumphal arches, adorned with trophies and garlands, and from ſpace to ſpace beautifully illuminated. The proceſſion is led by ſhepherdeſſes, ſtrewing flowers.

Firſt SHEPHERDESS.

Ariſe, ſweet meſſenger of morn,
With thy mild beam our ſkies adorn:
For long as ſhepherds pipe and play,
This, this ſhall be a holy-day!

Second

Second SHEPHERDESS.

See, morn appears; a roſy hue
Steals ſoft o'er yonder orient blue:
Soon let us meet in trim array,
And frolic out this holy-day!

Theſe are followed by ſoldiers with palm branches in their hands. An officer behind bears the Daniſh *ſtandard. Flouriſh of inſtruments.*

Firſt VOICE.

Swell the trumpet's boldeſt note!

Second VOICE.

Let the drum it's thunders roll!

BOTH.

And, as on aery wings they float,
Spread Alfred's *name from pole to pole!*

CHORUS.

Our ſons unborn,
Still on this morn
With annual joy ſhall tell;
How by his might,
In daring fight,
The foes of England *fell.*

AIR.

Prince, of every fame poſſeſt!
Prince and patriot both confeſt!
Thy grateful Albion *ſhall to lateſt days*
Roll down thy glories in a tide of praiſe!

CHORUS.

Thy grateful Albion *ſhall to lateſt days*
Roll down thy glories in a tide of praiſe.

ELTRUDA.

Yon pictur'd raven—tell me is it not
Their wonderous magic ſtandard!

DEVON.

'Tis the ſame:
Wrought by the ſiſters of the *Daniſh* king,
At midnight's blackeſt hour; when the ſick moon,
Wrapt in eclipſe by their enchanting ſong,
Down thro the turbid clouds her influence ſhed
Of baleful power. The ſiſters ever ſung—
"Shake, ſtandard, ſhake deſtruction on our foes."

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

ELTRUDA, HERMIT, *and the others.*

ALFRED *paſſing under the triumphal arches: the ſun, at the ſame time, riſing above the horizon.*

ELTRUDA.

He comes! the conqueror comes—

ALFRED.

In theſe lov'd arms
To loſe all ſorrow, and all bliſs to find!

ELTRUDA.

O from what fears deliver'd for thy life,
And in that life for a whole people's being,
I thus receive thee back! thus fold thee ſafe!
Love only, love like mine, can feel, not utter!

ALFRED.

To him aſcend all praiſe! whoſe will inſpir'd,
Whoſe arm ſuſtain'd this action, that reſtores
My better name—and, O more glorious ſtill,
Of nobler, dearer conſequence!—reſtores
Loſt *England* to her vigor, fame and freedom.

HERMIT.

For her, O Alfred, your more arduous taſk

But now begins: this conqueſt to ſecure;
To ſpread it's influence wide, and, well improv'd
By unremitting vigilance and valor,
Make this one blow deciſive of her fate.
But now behold, to animate thy hope,
In myſtic ſhew expreſs'd what late thy fortune
Seem'd to portend; and what the brightening ſcene
With fairer promiſe opens.

Four Furies ariſe, to the ſound of inſtruments in diſcord, at four different openings from under ground, with torches in their left hands, and bloody ſwords in their right. They form a confuſed Pyrrhic *dance, ſhaking and pointing their ſwords and torches round the king in their centre: till, upon a change of the muſic into regular harmony, deſcends the Genius of* England, *with a crowned ſword in one hand, and a lawrel-wreathe in the other. On ſight of whom the four Furies ſink thro the openings they aroſe from. He preſents the crowned ſword and lawrel-branch at the feet of the king, and reaſcends, while the following ſong is ſung.*

At laſt, at laſt,
Our night is paſt,
The gloomy night of fear:
And o'er our ſkies
Fair beams ariſe
Of peace and joy ſincere.
Then let triumph abound!
Let ecſtacy reign!
Till theſe hills all around,—around
Improving each ſtrain,
Our tranſports reſound;—reſound
The heart-felt tranſport that ſucceeds to pain!

ALFRED.

I hail th' auſpicious omen—but ah me!
Eltruda, ſee, where comes th' unhappy king!

ELTRUDA.

Oh ſight of woe!

ALFRED.

Retire, my gentle love:
An interview like this were too ſevere
For thy ſoft nature.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

ALFRED, HERMIT, DANISH KING.

ALFRED, *after a pauſe.*

See, at laſt, O king,
In thy ſad fate, which even a foe laments,
See and acknowledge heaven's impartial hand.
For violated oaths and plunder'd realms,
For the heap'd guilt of baſe perfidious war,
This retribution is moſt juſt.

DANE.

Away——
I own no guilt: or kings of every age
Are criminal, thy anceſtors and mine.
What is all war, but more diffuſive robbery
Made ſacred by ſucceſs? What object ſwells
A monarch's higheſt aim?—increaſe of power
And univerſal ſway. This glorious end
All means muſt ſanctify, that can ſecure.
For what remains—Of bondage, or of death,
The leſſer ill, I reck not. But, by Thor,
The gloomy thunderer! one diſtracting thought
Bends

Bends my ſoul's ſtrongeſt temper; ſinks me down
Beneath my own contempt.

ALFRED.

Such fears diſmiſs
As muſt diſhonor both. The truly brave
His foe in equal arms will dare to meet:
Vanquiſh'd, he dares not injure, nor inſult him.

DANE.

Nor that, nor ought without myſelf could thus
Unman me. No: my hell is here, within—
How! like a wretch, a nameleſs ſlave who fights
But for vile hire—in my own tent ſurpris'd!
Aſleep! unarm'd!--theſe ſhameful chains thrown o'er me,
And not one blow exchang'd! O baſer far
Than that low herd, who fled without a wound
Before thy ſword—They but deſerted him,
Who firſt himſelf abandon'd—But thy gods
Were vigilant for thee: while mine all ſlept.

ALFRED.

Your gods are idols: that ſole power I ſerve,
Supreme and one, is univerſal Lord
O'er earth and heaven. Be it my daily taſk,
As 'tis my nobleſt theme, to own, by him
Alone I conquer'd: as for him alone
I wiſh to reign—by making mankind bleſt!

DANE.

DANE.

No more—Convey me to your baſeſt dungeon.
Let me explore it's darkeſt depth; ſhut out
The light of heaven; forget there is a ſun
Who ſhines on my diſhonor. Would I might
Exclude too my own thoughts—But yet, my ſon
Lives—and is free! lives to revenge my fall!
To waſh my ſtains in blood—Ha! where was he
This fatal night, when every god forſook me!
Where, where was Ivar then?

HERMIT.

Unhappy prince!
That ſon, alas!—

DANE.

Ha! what! why, who art thou?
What of my ſon?

HERMIT.

Thy truſt in him is vain.
To his own raſhneſs and intemperate luſt,
This very night, a victim, here, he fell—
Lo! where he lies.

DANE.

My ſon—my ſon—Ha! dead—
My only child—But no: I will not weep.
Is he not ſafe, beyond misfortune's hand?

Beyond

Beyond all feeling of his father's ſhame?
Falſe hope, farewel!—Let madneſs, let deſpair
Surround me, ſeize me whole; till life's loath'd flame,
For ever quench'd in death, reſigns me o'er
To darkneſs and oblivion.

SCENE X.

ALFRED, HERMIT.

ALFRED.

Dire reverſe!
Dreadful impatience!—But theſe roving *Danes*
A ſtricter watch demand. Means more effectual
Muſt now be try'd, from our inſulted ſhores
To keep aloof this ſtill-deſcending war.
'Tis naval ſtrength, that muſt our peace aſſure.
Be this the firſt high object of my care,
To wall us round with well-appointed fleets.
In them our ſole dominion of the ſea,
Our wealth and grandeur, can alone be found,
The one great bulwark of our ſeparate world.

HERMIT.

Alfred, go on; the noble taſk purſue,
Which ſafety urges, and which fame demands.

Yet,

Yes, in her fleets, let *England* ever ſeek
Her ſure defence: by them, thro every age,
At home ſecure, renown'd and fear'd abroad,
Great arbitreſs of nations—Ha! the ſcene,
The radiant proſpect opens full before me!
Thro diſtant depths of time tranſported down,
I ſee whole moving foreſts, from her hills
Uprooted, bound triumphant o'er the main!
White tracks of glory brighten *Albion*'s ſkies,
As navies grow, as commerce ſwells her ſail
With every breeze that under heaven can blow,
From either pole; thro worlds yet unexplor'd,
In eaſt and weſt, that to thy ſons diſcloſe
Their golden ſtores, their wealth of various name,
And laviſh pour it on *Britannia*'s lap!

ALFRED.

Thy words new ſun-ſhine thro my breaſt diffuſe,
And ſmiling calm. But let us, Hermit, try,
By juſtice, mercy, arms and arts improv'd,
By freedom fenc'd around with ſacred laws,
Our promis'd bliſs to merit and adorn.
Now, to my glorious taſk——

HERMIT.

Yet ere you go,
One moment, Alfred, backward caſt your eyes

On

On this unfolding ſcene; where, pictur'd true,
As in a mirror, riſes fair to ſight
Our *England*'s genuine ſtrength and future fame.

Here is ſeen the ocean in proſpect, and ſhips ſailing along. Two boats land their crews; then join in a lively dance.

HERMIT.

Ceaſe, ceaſe your ſports a while. Behold, my lord,
Aged and blind, our venerable Bard:
Hear what the Muſe, who deigns with frequent foot
To viſit his glad cell, may now inſpire.

The bard ſings, to his harp, the following ode.

I.

When Britain *firſt at heaven's command,*
Aroſe from out the azure main;
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian-angels ſung this ſtrain:
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

II.

The nations, not ſo bleſt as thee,
Muſt in their turns to tyrants fall:

While

While thou ſhalt flouriſh great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

III.

* *Should war, ſhould faction ſhake thy iſle,*
And ſink to poverty and ſhame;
Heaven ſtill ſhall on Britannia *ſmile,*
Reſtore her wealth, and raiſe her name.
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

IV.

As the loud blaſt, that tears thy ſkies,
Serves but to root thy native oak;
Still more majeſtic ſhalt thou riſe,
From foreign, from domeſtic ſtroke.
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

V.

* *How bleſt the prince, reſerv'd by fate,*
In adverſe days to mount thy throne!

Renew

Renew thy once triumphant ſtate,
And on thy grandeur build his own!
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

VI.

* *His race ſhall long, in times to come,*
So heaven ordains, thy ſceptre wield,
Rever'd abroad, belov'd at home,
And be, at once, thy ſword and ſhield.
Rule, Britannia, *rule the waves:*
Britons *never will be ſlaves.*

ALFRED.

Amen! kind Powers, to this prophetic verſe.
O may the toils, I yet muſt undertake,
The ſlumbering genius of this iſle awake!
Revive her worth, relume her antient flame,
That ſhun'd no danger in the road to fame!
That ſaw no terrors, but in ſure diſgrace!
And only turn'd aſide, from what was baſe!
Yet, tho heaven means all humankind to bleſs,
From his own labors man muſt draw ſucceſs:

* The ſtanzas marked with aſteriſks, were written by the late lord Bolingbroke, in 1752.

Each

Each head, heart, arm, combin'd in one great view,
Their country's good, unweary'd, to purſue,
But, from this zenith, ſhould they once deſcend;
Should all their aims in venal poorneſs end:
Loſt is the nation, deaf to glory's call!
And, with fallen virtue, freedom too muſt fall!

The End of the MASQUE.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

WHILE our grave Hermit, buſy above ſtairs,
Employs his ſerious head on ſtate affairs,
Gallants, look here—faith I have plaid the rogue,
And ſtole his wand—by way of epilogue.
You critics, there below, had beſt be civil:
For I, with this ſame rod, can play the devil;
Ty all your buſy tongues up, one by one,
And turn what ſhare of brains you have—to ſtone:
The beau's ſoft ſkull convert to ſolid rock—
What then?—the wig will always have it's black.
But for the men of ſad and ſolemn face,
The deep dark ſages in or out of place,
Who much in port and politics delight,
Small change, God knows, will make them ſtatues quite.
The ladies too—but now theſe witlings ſneer—
No, fair ones, you ſhall meet no inſult here:
I only hint my power—that, if I liſt,
I yet can charm you two long hours from whiſt.

But,

But, cards are ready, you are all beſpoke—
To ſpoil a dozen drums, would be no joke.
Beſides, 'twould be mere arbitrary ſway:
Such, as of old, was us'd at Nero's *play,*
Who, when he ſung and fiddled to the town,
Still, as his ſubjects yawn'd, would knock them down.
No, Sirs; to gain a heart, we muſt not teize:
Who would engage it, firſt ſhould aim to pleaſe.
This part be mine: and, if I now ſucceed
To my own wiſh, you will be pleas'd indeed.
Then—for a trial: thus, I wave my hand,
To prove the power of this inchanting wand.

On waving her wand,

The ſcene opens, and diſcovers a beautiful valley, bordered on each hand by foreſt trees, riſing irregularly, and forming from ſpace to ſpace various groves. The proſpect behind is a landſchape of woodlands, and of mountains that aſcend above one another, till the laſt ſeem to loſe themſelves in the ſky. From the ſummit of the neareſt hill a river pours down, by ſeveral falls, in a natural caſcade. The warbling of birds is heard.

FIRST ENTRY.

A huſbandman, his wife, and family.

SHE.

How ſoft is the ſcene!
The woodlands how green!
What charms in the nightingale's lay!

HE.

Fair peace, that now reigns
On our hills and our plains,
'Tis peace bids all nature be gay.

CHORUS.

'Tis peace bids all nature be gay.

SHE.

The diſtaff,

HE.

The plow,

BOTH.

Shall employ our hands now,
For ourſelves and our children alone.

HE.

Secure from the foe,
We ſhall reap what we ſow:
And the year, the whole year is our own!

CHORUS.

And the year, the whole year is our own.

She waves her wand. SECOND ENTRY.

A ſhepherd, and ſhepherdeſs.

They run into each others arms.

SHE.

If to meet is all this pleaſure,
Sure, to part was killing pain!

BOTH.

Yes, to part, was killing pain!

HE.

If 'twas grief to loſe our treaſure,
How tranſporting to regain!

BOTH.

O 'tis tranſport to regain!

HE.

Thus poſſeſſing—

SHE.

Every bleſſing
Crowns the maid—

HE.

And crowns her ſwain.

BOTH.

Crowns the happy maid and ſwain!

She

She waves her wand. THIRD ENTRY.

Soldiers deſcend the mountain by two different paths: at the bottom they lay down the ſpoils with which they are loaded; and then, advancing, two of them ſing the following ballad.

FIRST MAN.

We have fought; we have conquer'd: and *England* once more
Shall flouriſh in fame, as ſhe flouriſh'd before.
Our fears are all fled, with our enemies ſlain:
* Could they riſe up anew—

SECOND.

We would ſlay them again.

His monarch to ſerve, or to do himſelf right,
No *Engliſhman* yet ever flinch'd from the fight.
For why, neighbours all, we are free as the king:
* 'Tis this makes us brave—

FIRST.

And 'tis this makes us ſing.

Our prince too, for this, will be thankful to fate—
It is, in our freedom, he finds himſelf great!
No force can be wanting, nor meaner court-arts:
* He is maſter of all—

* The verſes marked with an aſteriſk to be ſung a ſecond time by both.

SECOND.

Who will reign in our hearts!
Should rebels within, or ſhould foes from without,
Bring the crown on his head, or his honor, in doubt;
We are ready—

FIRST.

Still ready—and boldly foretell,
* That conqueſt ſhall ever with liberty dwell!

SECOND.

But now, bring us forth, as the crown of our labor,
Much wine and good chear—

FIRST.

With the pipe and the tabor.
Let our nymphs all be kind, and our ſhepherds be gay:
For *England*, Old *England*, is happy to day.

CHORUS.

Let our nymphs all be kind, and our ſhepherds be gay:
For *England*, Old *England*, is happy to day!

They all mix in a dance, to the pipe and tabor.

The END.

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS BACON, LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following life of Lord Bacon has been twice tranſlated into French: and both times, perhaps, in ſuch a manner as could convey, to thoſe who were able to read it in that language only, no very juſt idea of the original. Beſides departing almoſt entirely from the turn of his expreſſion, the tranſlators miſtook, in many places, the author's ſenſe and meaning. This laſt error, however, ought to be forgiven them, the more readily, as our tranſlations out of their tongue are liable, almoſt univerſally, to the ſame cenſure, and that too in a greater degree. Therefore,

Hanc veniam petimus, damuſque viciſſim.

But in my caſe, the thing has gone farther. The firſt tranſlator, by his art of political chymiſtry, extracted out of plain and literal hiſtory a libel on Sir Robert Walpole's adminiſtration. The laſt has made me ſay, in matters of opinion, what I never thought; and commit blunders, in matters of fact, which the moſt moderate acquaintance with

hiſtory muſt have preſerved both him and me from falling into. And yet, upon ſuch a tranſlation as this, have the journaliſts of Trevoux formed their judgment, it may be a little too haſtily, not only of the author's talents, but of his morals. As this is really the caſe, how muſt that learned ſociety be ſurprized to find, that the licentiouſneſs they complain of had it's riſe in their own country, not in Britain? and that the French catholic, not the Engliſh heretic, is entirely accountable for it?

If the author of this life has remarked, with ſome freedom, on the diſſolute lives of the clergy, during the darker ages, that memorable aera of chriſtian ignorance and chriſtian depravity; he has done no more than what ſome very reſpectable writers of the Roman communion had done before him: and what the beſt men of their church and ours, even now, acknowledge and deplore. The reverend journaliſts have ſeen the life of Bacon thro' the medium of a tranſlation, which has not only obſcured, but altered the features of it's original: and thoſe parts, which to them appeared moſt exceptionable, were certainly aggravated, if not wholly changed, by the

the hand that copied them. Of this they will find more than one inſtance in the letter immediately following; which is therefore publiſhed for their truer information. What is ſaid in it of the life, or it's author, is entirely ſubmitted to the judgment of the public; without any thing even inſinuated on his part to prejudice them in favor of the very ingenious writer, to whom they are obliged for it. I beg leave only to ſay, that I ſubſcribe heartily to the ſentiments which will be found towards the end of this letter. They are the ſentiments of a man who loves, becauſe he underſtands, the true intereſts of humanity. And I ſhall never be afraid to own, that whatever notions have a tendency to deſtroy thoſe, whether in Britiſh or foreign writings, whether in peace or war, are the objects of my ſincereſt deteſtation. War, in it's own nature, is the great ſcourge of human kind, and the great reproach of human reaſon: and, from the beginning of time, none was ever made that could be fully juſtified in all it's circumſtances. Is it not then a diſgrace to our common humanity, while our reſpective nations are plunged into the inevitable calamities that are ever attendant upon war, to inflame and exaſperate thoſe ca-

lamities, by the petulance of wit and the bitterneſs of abuſe? But I believe all men of ſenſe, who are at the ſame time men of virtue, will agree, that they are by no means the beſt writers, or the beſt ſubjects, of either nation, who are the moſt guilty of this enormity. Opprobrious names and inſolent railing are no more the marks of real genius, than oaths and bluſtering are of true courage. On the contrary, it were to be wiſhed that all our authors, and all our commanders too, had copied after the example of the duke of Randan at Hanover, and the late duke of Marlborough at St. Malo. A good writer may defend the cauſe of his country, nay he muſt defend it better, without having recourſe to the deſpicable aid of odious appellations, and virulent ſarcaſms: as an able general may honeſtly obey his ſovereign's orders, without reducing to abſolute miſery the unhappy people, whom he had before inſulted with all the wantonneſs of contempt. A captain of banditti could do no more: Mandrin did much leſs. The Engliſh nobleman I have mentioned, and whoſe untimely death has put half our nobility into mourning, will be no leſs lamented by the better few in France, for his humane and generous behaviour there, than the count de Giſors was

in

in England, for the amiable qualities by which he was diſtinguiſhed among us. The following verſes on his death were produced here: and let it be remembred that the two nations were then at war. This, had they no other merit, would make them worthy of being preſerved, longer than any thing of mine can deſerve to live.

Cultiver tous les arts, protéger le génie,
Joindre au gout le ſavoir & les graces aux moeurs,
Combattre pour ſon Roi, mourir pour ſa patrie,
Regretté des vaincus, admiré des vainqueurs,
Telle fut de Giſors & l'étude & la gloire :
Par leurs accens plaintifs les Nymphes de la Loire
D'une épouſe & d'un pere expriment les douleurs ;
Sur l'urne du Héros leurs mains jettent des fleurs :
Ma muſe plus timide honore ſa mémoire
Moins par ſes vers que par ſes pleurs.

VOUS me félicitez, mon cher ami, d'avoir renoncé au pénible emploi d'abréger les ouvrages d'autrui. Quoi ! tous les deux mois un volume ? Je vous entens, & dans ce que vous me dites je démêle ce que votre politeſſe me cache. Les ouvrages périodiques avancent auſſi peu la réputation que la fortune. Vous connoiſſez ces mouches éphemeres, inſectes d'une ſaiſon, dont les eſſaims nombreux, éclos au point du jour, s'élevent de quatre piés, obſcurciſſent l'air, s'y débattent, & tombent pour ne plus revivre dans le marais où ils ſont nés ; & vous dites, ces inſectes ces mouches n'ont ni le vol plus étendu, ni la vie plus durable, que les innombrables critiques de chaque premier jour du mois.

Efimeri del campo
Germogliano il mattin, cagion la ſera.

Cette idée mépriſable des journaux n'eſt point la mienne. J'en ai compoſé, j'en ai lu. J'en connois la difficulté,

difficulté, j'en admire l'uſage. Les moins travaillés ont le leur. Eh ! que deviendroient ſans eux nos deſoeuvrés, qui douze fois par an y puiſent la quantité de connoiſſance qui leur convient, & font circuler dans les cercles ce qu'ils ont retenu des magaſins & des mercures ?

Mais quand cette partie du public, qui attend les journaux pour juger des livres, ſeroit plus reſpectable qu'elle ne l'eſt, je vous pardonnerois de ne pas vous y joindre. Vous vous plaignez de mes confrères. Je les excuſe & ne vous blâme pas. Le mâle hiſtorien de Bacon a droit d'appeller à ſon ſiècle & à la poſtérité des cenſures de Trevoux †, & des jugemens de Liege ‡.

Il y a cependant, Monſieur, quelqu'un qui vous a plus maltraité. C'eſt celui qui a donné au public la *Vie du Chancelier Bacon traduite de l'Anglois*. Ce livre imprimé *in* 8 à Amſterdam (ou plûtôt à Paris) 1755, eſt l'ouvrage, que les Journaliſtes François ont analyſé. Pouvoient-ils deviner que cette hiſtoire n'eſt point la vôtre, & que ſemblable à l'Hippolite trainé par

† *Mem. de Trevoux, Janv.* 1756. ‡ *Journ. Encyclop. Janv.* 1756.

par des chevaux, elle n'offre à ceux qui la comparent avec l'hiſtoire Angloiſe,

Qu'un objet, où des Dieux éclate la colère,
Et que méconnoitroit l'oeil même de ſon père?

Ce ſeroit être trop ſévère que de défendre à un journaliſte de juger d'un ouvrage, dont il n'a pas l'original ſous les yeux. Il y a des traductions dont un coup d'oeil garantit la fidélité. Il ſe trouve des génies, qui dans ce qu'on fait dire à un auteur démêlent ce qu'il a du dire. Mais tout le monde n'a pas cette pénétration ; & le plus ſûr eſt de ne pas ſe preſſer à mettre ſur le compte de l'original les fautes qu'on trouve dans la copie. Entre l'auteur & le traducteur le préjugé doit être en faveur du premier. Et ſi ce traducteur eſt anonyme, ſi ſon travail paroit précipité, ſi ſon ouvrage renferme des erreurs de fait & des fautes d'écolier, - - - - alors ſans doute cette règle a une double force, & le journaliſte qui y manque ne ſaiſit qu'un nuage en croyant embraſſer Junon.

Le ſtile en général, diſent les journaliſtes de Liege, *eſt négligé :* je le crois comme eux, pourvu qu'ils ne parlent que de l'hiſtoire Françoiſe. *L'auteur & le tra-*

traducteur ne ſe réveillent que lors qu'il faut fraper quelque portrait intéreſſant. FRAPER UN PORTRAIT ! l'expreſſion eſt neuve ; je la paſſe cependant auſſi bien que l'injuſtice de mettre ſur votre compte le ſommeil de leur compatriote. Mais non ; ſuivant les auteurs de Trevoux, tant s'en faut que ce traducteur s'endorme—*dans ſon ſtile*, diſent-ils, *il eſt libre & aiſé, fier & ferme : en traduiſant ſa plume ne paroit ſouffrir ni génes ni entraves ; & loin d'avoir comme les traducteurs la modeſtie d'un ſubalterne qui adminiſtre des biens étrangers, il a toute l'indépendance d'un maitre, qui diſpoſe comme il lui plait de ſes propres richeſſes.* Ceci eſt-il un éloge ou une ironie ? En liſant le journal de Trevoux on démêle difficilement l'un de l'autre. Mais lequel des deux que ce ſoit, j'oſe aſſurer que ſi c'eſt un mérite à un traducteur d'être indépendant, jamais perſonne n'y eut plus de droit que le vôtre.

En faut-il des preuves ? Je les trouve à la lettre à chaque page. Bornons-nous aux plus marquées. Je pardonnerois à un traducteur, qui, écrivant en terre papale, ſupprimeroit la période ſuivante. *L'eſprit exécrable de la ſuperſtition, à laquelle cette Reine* (Marie) *s'étoit livrée, ſe montra ſans déguiſement. Des prêtres*

prêtres, des inquiſiteurs inhumains lui prêterent leur affreux miniſtère. On trahit, on tourmenta, on fit miſerablement périr quiconque refuſa de profeſſer ce qu'il lui étoit impoſſible de croire. Mais pourquoi ſubſtituer à ces expreſſions qu'autoriſe votre climat celles-ci, qui ne ſont d'aucun pays, & ne décèlent la connoiſſance d'aucune hiſtoire? *Marie avoit abjuré la religion de ſon pere en Angleterre, & par ce changement elle porta la diviſion & le trouble dans ſon royaume: on empriſonnoit, on dépouilloit de leurs biens, on faiſoit mourir tous ceux qui refuſoient de profeſſer une foi, qui n'étoit point la leur ni celle de leurs peres.* Comment Meſſieurs de Trevoux ſi clairvoyans, lorſqu'il s'agit de trouver dans les ouvrages d'autrui *de quoi blâmer*, ont-ils manqué cet endroit? Qui ne ſait qu'à la réſerve de l'autorité du pape & de la ſainteté des moines, *Henri* VIII. croyoit les mêmes choſes que ſa fille? & que ſi la foi à laquelle on vouloit ramener les proteſtans n'étoit & ne pouvoit être la leur, elle avoit été du moins celle de leurs peres?

Vous aviez ſagement dit que l'oeconomie ſeule d'Eliſabeth la mit en état d'acquitter une dette de quatre millions, dont la nation ſe trouvoit chargée, mais

mais vous n'aviez garde de penſer & moins encore d'écrire qu'elle opéra ce prodige *ſans impots & ſans ſubſides*. En parlant du ſeul bienfait que Bacon obtint de ſon allié le grand Burghley, le traducteur oublie que ce fut une ſimple ſurvivance, & non la poſſeſſion actuelle d'une charge, qui ne devint vacante que vingt ans après. *Coke* diſiez-vous, *étoit le plus grand Juriſconſulte de ſon tems, mais ne pouvoit être autre choſe. Coke*, dit le traducteur avec auſſi peu de politeſſe que de vérité, *très ignorant d'ailleurs ne ſavoit que la loi. Le prince Henri, qui avoit toutes les bonnes qualités qui manquoient au Roi ſon frere, &c.* Le prince Henri frère du Roi Jaques! cette faute eſt trop groſſiere pour ne pas être miſe ſur le compte de l'imprimeur. Que ne puis je y mettre auſſi la confuſion des deux Theodores? l'inventeur de la poudre à canon placé dans le dernier ſiecle? la deſcente des Normans & leur conquête miſes au IX. avant les ſuccès d'Alfred? & le mot célèbre du vainqueur de Rome, *qu'il étoit plus glorieux d'étendre les bornes de l'eſprit humain que de reculer celles d'un empire*, attribué à Ciceron & appliqué à Céſar?

Après

Après des mépriſes ſi fortes, il ne faut plus s'étonner que le François qui a traduit votre livre, confondant deux mots Anglois, dont le ſon & le ſens diffèrent autant que l'orthographe †, transforme le *juge des plaidoyés communs*, ou des differens de particulier à particulier, en juge *des jeux communs*; qu'il ignore que les mots de *Queen's Council* déſignent les avocats de la cour, & non les *conſeillers du conſeil de la Reine*; qu'il rende enfin *ſageſſe* par *jugement*, *renommée* par *invention*, *badinage* par *eſprit*, & *ſermon* par *lecture*.

En écartant ces fautes où vous n'entrez pour rien, j'ai relevé la plus grande partie des critiques qu'on vous a faites. On vous blame d'avoir *mêlé & comme pénétré enſemble l'hiſtoire de Bacon & celle d'Angleterre.* Vos épiſodes fatiguent, vos digreſſions font perdre de vue le héros. Ce jugement m'étonne. Votre Héros ſeroit-il un S. François ou un S. Ignace, perſonnages fameux, qui tirent d'eux ſeuls toute leur gloire, & dont l'hiſtoire ne tient en rien à celle de leur tems? Il ne leur faut point d'accompagnement; leurs buſtes ſont faits pour leurs niches. Mais le portrait d'un homme

† *Pleas* a été pris pour *Plays*, & ailleurs je trouve qu'on a lu *hint* pour *hit*.

homme d'état n'exige-t-il pas qu'on dépeigne la nation dont il fut miniſtre, & les princes qui l'employèrent ? Parlera-t-on d'un avocat, ſans rien dire de ſes concurrens, de ſes plaidoyés, de ſes ſuccès ? Rendra-t-on juſtice enfin à un homme qui reforma la philoſophie, ſi l'on ne donne une idée de ce que la philoſophie étoit avant lui, & de ce qu'elle ſeroit peut-être encore s'il n'avoit pas vécu ? Soutenir de tels paradoxes, Monſieur, ſouhaiter une vie de Bacon, où il ne ſoit queſtion ni d'Eliſabeth ni de Jaques, où Eſſex, Coke, Overbury, Somerſet, Buckingham demeurent derriere le rideau, où enfin l'on ne faſſe connoitre ni la philoſophie des ſcholaſtiques ni la théologie des moines, c'eſt vouloir une vie de Ciceron, où Verres, Catilina, Hortenſius, Céſar, Rome enfin & l'Académie ne trouveront aucune place.

Vos cenſeurs, Monſieur, ont ſi je ne me trompe regardé votre ouvrage comme une pièce iſolée. Les deux dernières éditions en quatre volumes *in folio* des oeuvres de Bacon ne leur ſont point parvenues. S'ils les avoient vues, auroient-ils méconnu la deſtination d'une vie, qui ſert en quelque ſorte d'introduction & de clé aux lettres & aux diſcours de ce grand homme.

Les

Les particularités qu'elle contient ſont du moins plus néceſſaires pour l'intelligence de ces pièces, que ne le ſeroient les évanouiſſemens de Bacon dans les éclipſes de lune, & le certificat de mort fourni par ſon chapelain, qu'on vous blâme d'avoir omis. Quand les Plutarques ſe tireront d'un monaſtère, l'hiſtoire d'un grand homme deviendra le panégyrique d'un ſaint. Les rapports des choſes y feront place aux liaiſons des anecdotes, & aux tranſitions des ſentences. Nous n'y trouverons point ces grands tableaux des moeurs, des connoiſſances, de la politique d'un ſiècle; mais l'on ne négligera point de nous apprendre que le héros aſſiſtoit à la meſſe, qu'il ſavoit ſon *credo*, & qu'il a reçu l'extrême onction.

Mais, Monſieur, votre tombeau ne ſera point en terre ſainte. Meſſieurs de Trevoux vous accuſent d'outrer la *liberté de penſer* & la *licence Anglicane*. Avec de tels ſentimens ſi l'on va en paradis, ce n'eſt point ſans paſſer par le purgatoire. " Pour montrer, diſent les " gardiens du dépot de la foi, juſqu'où l'hiſtorien " pouſſe ſa témérité, il ſuffit de citer une ſeule de ſes " propoſitions; *Dieu*, dit-il, *ſemble avoir laiſſé (la " Religion) au choix de l'homme.*" J'ai cherché en vain

vain dans votre livre cette ſentence peu catholique. Voici tout ce que j'y ai trouvé page 15 & 16. " Les " révolutions dans la religion, plus encore que les " alterations dans le gouvernement, ſont propres à " exciter dans tout le corps de la ſociété de violentes " agitations ; parce que chaque particulier eſt alors " immédiatement & intimément animé de ce qui lui " paroit l'intéret le plus grand & le plus durable †." Rapprochez, je vous prie, ces paroles, de celles-ci que le traducteur y a ſubſtituées pag. 21 & 22, & ſur les quelles la cenſure des journaliſtes eſt fondée. *Les changemens en cette matière* (de religion) *ſont plus propres que tous les autres à exciter des troubles par la fermentation qu'ils ſont naitre dans les eſprits, qui ſouffrent impatiemment de ſe voir contraints & génés ſur une choſe, que Dieu ſemble avoir laiſſée au choix de l'homme.* Cette *licence gallicane* ſurprendra ſans doute Meſſrs de Trevoux. De quelque préjugé national qu'ils puiſſent être animés, je doute que s'ils liſent cette lettre ils ne conviennent que les *principes d'indépendance* ne ſont

† *Revolutions in religion are apt to put the whole conſtitution of a ſociety into a ferment, even more ſtrongly than alterations in government ; as every individual is immediately and intimately actuated by what ſeems to him of higheſt and moſt laſting concern.*

ſont pas un ſimple fruit de terroir; qu'une *plume françoiſe* peut *enchérir* ſur la licence de notre Iſle; & qu'en un mot les *bons François* & les *vrais Chrétiens* ne ſont pas tout-à-fait ſynonimes.

S'il ſuffiſoit de ſe montrer l'un pour être l'autre, perſonne à coup ſur n'approcheroit des vénérables pères, qui vous ont traité comme depuis la guerre ils traitent vos compatriotes. Leurs mémoires, dans leur deſtination conſacrés uniquement aux ſciences & aux arts, le ſont depuis nos malheureuſes diviſions aux traits que lancent contre nous mille petits écrivains, dont le zèle aveugle eſt l'unique mérite; & qui de leur ſouffle impur enveniment des playes déja trop ſanglantes, & dont un homme de bien tenteroit la guériſon ou détourneroit les regards. Meſſieurs de Trevoux recueillent dans leurs volumes ces fruits venimeux du reſſentiment & de la haine: ils les conſacrent, que dis-je? ils en augmentent & l'acreté & le poiſon †.

Pour

† La comparaiſon des Anglois au vautour, que l'aigle victorieux de la France tient dans ſes ſerres vengereſſes, & ſe prepare à mettre en pieces; les accuſations d'ambition, de machiaveliſme, de piraterie, qui reviennent chaque mois; le conſeil inſultant donné à leurs ennemis de mettre leur modeſtie de niveau avec leurs

Pour juger ſi ce reproche eſt fondé, je vous invite à lire les extraits, que nos journaliſtes ont donnés des *Mémoires* publiés en France ſur les prétenſions des deux peuples ; du livre infidèle intitulé *Précis des faits* ; du *Parallèle* odieux & ſi ſujet à retortion des *Cartaginois* & des *Anglois* ; du *Roman politique* ; de *l'Obſervateur* dirai-je ou du boutefeu prétendu *Hollandois*, & de je ne

leurs ſuccès, telles ſont quelques unes des fleurs du Journal de Trevoux. Voulez vous juger de leur ſtile, liſez la tirade ſuivante. C'eſt une des plus modérées. " Le ſage, dit Grotius (*Grot. de* " *Jure Bell. & Pac.* l. iii. cap. 25.) ne fait la guerre que pour " avoir la paix ; telle eſt depuis longtems la maxime du gou- " vernement François ; il a même ajouté, dans la conjoncture " préſente, à l'eſprit de cette maxime ; il a imité l'exemple de " Scipion, qui aima mieux diſſimuler les intrigues de Carthage, " que de rompre d'abord avec cette entreprenante Republique.

" Mais enfin le moment de la vengeance arrive : ceux qui s'ob- " ſtinent à vouloir le mal, dit Seneque (*Senec.* l. i. *de Irâ*, cap. 15 " & 16.) méritent qu'on leur en faſſe porter la peine. Quels doi- " vent être aujourd'hui (en 1757) les ſentimens de cette fameuſe " Albion, qui a voulu la guerre ſous les plus légers prétextes ; " qui l'a commencée par des pirateries, qui l'a ſoutenue avec " plus d'animoſité que de ſuccès ; qui n'a bien connu ni ce " qu'elle devoit défendre ni ce qu'elle pouvoit attaquer, ni les " ennemis qu'elle ſe faiſoit en Europe, ni les alliés qu'il lui " convenoit d'acquérir en Amérique : procédés ſinguliers dans " toute cette guerre, où l'on reconnoit, du côté des agreſſeurs, " le deſir de nuire deſtitué de conſeil, & l'ambition d'envahir " ſans l'art de conquerir avec gloire."

ne ſais quels poëmes, dont je ne citerai que ce ſeul vers,

Ta patrie a l'orgueil & la foi de Carthage.

Jamais je n'ai ſi bien ſenti la vérité de ce mot que la haine eſt aveugle, qu'en parcourant dans le Journal de Trevoux les trois *lettres d'un Officier Irlandois*, qui s'efforce à prouver, que depuis le départ de ceux qui comme lui ont préféré à leur patrie une cauſe proſcrite, les Anglois ſont entièrement privés & de courage & de vertu.

Les auteurs du Journal des Savans ont pris part dans la quérèle nationale. Ils ont expoſé avec fidélité & avec feu les raiſons & les plaintes de leurs compatriotes. Mais quelle délicateſſe dans leur choix! quelle politeſſe dans leur ſtile! quelle décence dans leurs tableaux! quelle modération dans leurs traits! D'où vient cette différence entr'eux & les journaliſtes de Trevoux? Les uns ſont-ils plus citoyens & les autres plus philoſophes? Ceux-là connoiſſent-ils l'eſprit & ceux-ci portent-ils ſimplement le nom du maitre & du grand docteur de la paix?

Il eſt vrai qu'au défaut de Jéſus, Sénèque eſt l'oracle des derniers. Sur le papier comme ſur la mer, dira le P. B.... vos gens furent les agreſſeurs. Per-

mettez-nous de juſtes repreſailles. Les François ſont-ils moins maltraités dans vos brochures & dans le *London Evening Poſt* que les Anglois ne le ſont dans nos feuilles & dans la *Gazette d'Amſterdam ?* Non, mon révérend Pere, & j'en gémis avec tous ceux qui penſent en grand & ſentent en hommes. Mais nos petits écrivains de *pamphlets* ont-ils un nom ? Vous ſied-il de vous confondre avec eux ? d'en emprunter ces portraits hideux qu'ils tracent de leur propre nation ? de faire par choix ce qu'ils font par néceſſité ? Y a-t-il enfin parmi nous, je ne dis pas une Société comparable à la vôtre, mais un ſeul auteur de reputation, qui vous ait donné ce dangereux exemple, ou qui ne rougit de l'imiter ?

J'ai peu de gout pour les diſputes de politique : je ne ſuis pas tenté de ſoutenir ſans miſſion les droits & les démarches de ceux qui nous gouvernent, & moins encore de rejetter ſur nos ennemis les injuſtices qu'ils nous reprochent. Je ſais que les particuliers ſont rarement bien inſtruits des reſſorts qui déterminent les princes, & qu'ils ne doivent point l'être. Attaché fortement à un Etat, dont un choix réfléchi m'a rendu citoyen, je partage avec zèle ſes bons & ſes mauvais ſuccès : ſi des mains auſſi foibles que les miennes pouvoient jamais être utiles, elles ſeroient employées

à ſon

à ſon ſervice, & il n'y a point de ſacrifice que je ne fuſſe pret de lui faire, à la réſerve de celui de l'humanité. Dans ces ſentimens, mon cher ami, je me réjouis de nos avantages, ſans inſulter aux pertes de nos ennemis ; & la victoire la plus glorieuſe perdroit pour moi tout ſon prix, ſi je ne la regardois comme un acheminement à la paix.

Je ſais combien cet équilibre eſt difficile, & je ne me flatte pas de n'en jamais ſortir. Que l'animoſité eſt naturelle contre ceux, dirai-je qui nous font & dont on craint du mal, ou à qui l'on en fait ſoi-même ! Le coeur décide, nos intérets forment nos gouts, & l'amour de la patrie eſt & doit être une paſſion.

Il y a entre les diverſes nations des modes pour la haine comme il y en a pour l'amour. Le philoſophe entrainé par le torrent ſe met inſenſiblement à l'étiquette. Les gens de lettres à Paris donnoient, diſoit-on, dans l'Anglomanie avant la guerre. Je crains que depuis ils ne ſoient devenus Anglomiſes ou Anglophobes.

Diſtinguer ce qu'on doit au titre de citoyen de ce qu'exige celui d'homme, c'eſt une diſcuſſion délicate digne de la plume d'un Monteſquieu. Elle exige des connnoiſſances, une tranquilité d'eſprit & un loiſir dont

je ne jouis point. Permettez-moi cependant de haſarder un petit nombre d'idées, qui, au défaut de liaiſons & de dévelopement, auront le mérite dont vous faites le plus de cas, celui d'être & les fruits & les ſignes du ſentiment.

1. On n'eſt point obligé de croire quelque gouvernement que ce ſoit ou entièrement infaillible ou tout-à-fait inexcuſable. Toutes les injures ſont rarement d'un ſeul coté. Rome n'étoit pas plus vertueuſe que Carthage, & Pompée eut autant de torts que Céſar. C'eſt témérité que d'imputer à la mauvaiſe foi ce qui peut avoir été l'effet des circonſtances ou du préjugé. C'eſt injuſtice que de changer en principe dominant une erreur accidentelle. C'eſt le plus grand des crimes que de rendre toute une nation reſponſable des fautes ou des mauvais procédés de ſes chefs.

2. La ſociété des gens de lettres diſperſée dans les diverſes nations ne doit jamais ſe deſunir. Moins encore lui ſied-il de transférer dans les ſciences les opérations de la guere. La conquète de l'Angleterre par les Normans, devoit-elle fournir dans des circonſtances critiques un ſujet de prix à une académie? J'ouvre certains recueils, & j'y vois les périodes de nos malheureuſes ruptures marqués par des excurſions ſur la litterature, la philoſophie, la religion des peuples, qu'en

qu'en d'autres tems peut-être on avoit trop loués. Quoi parce que les François & les Anglois ſe diſputent l'Ohio, Newton n'eſt-il qu'un faiſeur d'hypothèſes, & Fontenelle qu'un écrivain ſans gout* ?

3. La laſſitude ou l'épuiſement des partis, un combat de généroſité, un intérêt de miniſtère, que ſais-je ? moins que tout cela peut-être va terminer la guerre. Elles finiſſent toutes, comme elles commencent, par des riens. La paix revient, la confiance renait, l'humanité reprend ſes droits. Au lieu d'accoutumer l'eſprit des peuples à la haine, tâchons de leur inſpirer, ſinon de l'amour, du moins du reſpect pour leurs ennemis. Ne repétons plus ni de part ni d'autre les odieuſes dénominations de perfides ou de lâches. Que nos diſcours, que ſurtout nos écrits expriment nos regrets d'être ennemis de peuples, que mille vertus nous engagent d'aimer.

Ja

* Des philoſophes peuvent-ils pouſſer auſſi loin, m'allez vous dire, l'animoſité nationale ? Liſez, Monſieur. " La célébre Al-
" bion n'eſt pas le ſeul pays où l'on *penſe*, comme quelques fades
" adulateurs l'ont écrit parmi nous. Cette guerre eſt en général
" une des bonnes occaſions qui pût ſe préſenter de nous déprendre
" des idées Angloiſes ; de leur litterature, de leurs modes, de
" leur faux amour de la liberté, de leurs principes outrés en
" tout genre, &c. Que d'admiration perdue, quand on voit tout
" cela de près !" J'eſpère que ceux qui ont jugé la guerre une *bonne occaſion* pour une réflexion de ce genre, n'attendront pas pour en rougir, le retour de la paix.

Jadis près des bords de l'Euphrate vivoit un philoſophe père de pluſieurs fils. Nés avec des qualités différentes & des paſſions fortes, rarement ils paſſoient leurs journées ſans diſputes. Souvent ils en venoient aux coups ; dernière raiſon des enfans comme des Roix. Mais leurs combats étoient légers, ils ſe relevoient à la première chute, s'embraſſoient, ſe demandoient mutuellement pardon, & d'ordinaire le vainqueur faiſoit les frais du raccommodement. Mes enfans, leur avoit dit leur père, il vaudroit mieux céder vos droits que de les diſputer par la force. Mais vous êtes trop jeunes pour ſentir la ſageſſe de ce conſeil. Battez-vous donc, lorſque vous ne pourrez vous entendre ; mais je défens les injures, & je veux qu'après vos combats celui qui ſe trouvera ſupérieur ſe relâche en faveur d'un frère déja ſuffiſamment humilié. Peuples de l'Europe, ces enfans ce ſont vous, leurs jouets ſont les vôtres ; ne ſoyez ni plus ardens qu'eux dans vos quérèles, ni plus enflés dans vos ſuccès, ni plus fixes dans vos reſſentimens, & puiſqu'après vos combats il faudra vous raccommoder, ne vous faites point d'inſultes, dont le ſouvenir ſubſiſteroit, ſans doute malgré vous, après la paix. La perte d'une ville peut être oubliée : un bon mot ou une injure ne ſe pardonne jamais.

4. L'Abbé de S. Pierre, auteur reſpecté de projets bienfaiſans, qu'on n'a traités de rêves que parcequ'ils ſuppoſent le genre humain plus agé de quelques ſiècles qu'il ne l'eſt, eſt mort perſuadé qu'une paix perpétuelle en Europe étoit moins impraticable & moins éloignée que la pierre philoſophale, ou le mouvement perpétuel †. Peut-être en effet nos neveux verront-ils ce prodige, ſans en être étonnés ; mais ſi je ne me trompe ce n'eſt point, comme l'Abbé l'a cru, d'une diète de Rois qu'il faut l'attendre. Si la raiſon humaine ſe perfectione, il faut convenir que les Princes & leurs miniſtres ſont les enfans les plus tardifs. C'eſt chez les peuples que la réformation doit commencer, & c'eſt aux ſages à inſtruire les peuples. Que la liberté qui élève l'ame, que la police qui addoucit les moeurs, que le commerce & l'induſtrie qui égaliſent les climats, que la philoſophie enfin, qui transforme l'univers en une ſeule famille d'Etres néceſſaires les uns aux autres, s'étendent & ſe généraliſent; alors commencera cette année merveilleuſe, après laquelle ſoupirent les ſages, & que Platon, Locke, Fenelon & Monteſquieu ont travaillé à rapprocher.

C'eſt ſur leurs immortels ouvrages, mon cher ami, qu'il convient à tout auteur de former ſes écrits, s'il veut

† Liſez ſon ouvrage poſthume intitulé *Annales politiques*, o! vous qui donnez encore à Louis XIV, le nom de *Grand*.

veut ſe rendre utile à ſon ſiècle & cher à la poſtérité. Votre poëme d'Amintor & de Theodore eſt un engagement envers le public de pourſuivre la même route. Vous y peignites les funeſtes effets du fanatiſme religieux. Où ceux de l'enthouſiaſme politique feroient-ils plus d'impreſſion que dans la vie d'un héros ? L'hiſtoire du Duc de Marlborough, à laquelle vous travaillez, ſous les yeux du juge le plus éclairé, le plus délicat, & le plus philanthrope de l'Angleterre, remplie de faits ignorés & de vérités inſtructives, écrite avec la nobleſſe & le feu qui animent un hiſtorien jaloux du titre de précepteur de l'humanité, eſt attendue avec impatience de l'Europe entière ; & je ſais que c'eſt à l'Europe entière que vous la deſtinez. Cette conſideration, qui ſans doute vous engage à en différer la publication juſqu' à la paix, ſeroit pour moi une raiſon de plus d'en ſouhaiter, & s'il ſe pouvoit, d'en hâter le retour par mes voeux.

Je ſuis, avec un attachement ſincère,

Monſieur,

Vôtre très humble

& très obeiſſant Serviteur,

Du *Muſée Britannique*
le 1. de *Décembre*, 1758.

M. MATY.

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS BACON, LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND.

THE antient Egyptians had a law, which ordained, that the actions and characters of their Dead ſhould be ſolemnly canvaſſed before certain Judges; in order to regulate what was due to their memory. No quality, however exalted, no abilities, however eminent, could exempt the poſſeſſors from this laſt and impartial trial. To ingenuous minds this was a powerful incentive, in the purſuit of virtue: and a ſtrong reſtraint on the moſt abandoned, in their career of vice. Whoever undertakes to write the life of any perſon, deſerving to be remembred by poſterity, ought to look upon this law

as preſcribed to him. He is fairly to record the faults as well as the good qualities, the failings as well as the perfections, of the Dead; with this great view, to warn and improve the Living. For this reaſon, tho I ſhall dwell with pleaſure on the ſhining part of my Lord Bacon's character, as a writer; I ſhall not dare either to conceal or palliate his blemiſhes, as a man. It equally concerns the public to be made acquainted with both.

SIR Nicholas Bacon was the firſt Lord Keeper of the Seals, inveſted with all the dignity, and truſted with all the power, of a Lord Chancellor. This high employment he held under Queen Elizabeth near twenty years: a miniſter conſiderably learned, of remarkable prudence and honeſty; ſerving his country with the integrity of a good man, and preſerving, thro the whole courſe of his proſperity, that moderation and plainneſs of manners which adorn a great man. His ſecond wife was a daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, who had been preceptor to Edward the Sixth, and of whom hiſtorians have made honorable mention for his ſkill in the learned languages. Neither have they forgot to celebrate this Lady, on the ſame account. To the truth of which even an * enemy bore teſtimony,

* Parſons the Jeſuit.

teſtimony; while he reproached her with having tranſlated, from the Latin, Biſhop Jewel's apology for the Church of England.

Such were the parents of Francis Bacon, whoſe life I am writing. Of two ſons, by this marriage, he was the youngeſt: and born at York-Houſe in the Strand, the twenty-ſecond of January 1561. As he had the good fortune to come into the world at a period of time when arts and ſciences were eſteemed and cultivated, by the Great and Powerful, almoſt in the ſame degree they are now neglected; ſo he brought with him a capacity for every kind of knowledge, uſeful and ornamental. An original genius, formed not to receive implicit notions of thinking and reaſoning from what was admitted and taught before him; but to preſcribe laws himſelf, in the empire of learning, to his own and ſucceeding ages!

He gave marks, very early, of a pregnant and happy diſpoſition, far above his years. We are told that Queen Elizabeth took a particular delight in trying him with queſtions; and received ſo much ſatisfaction from the good ſenſe and manlineſs of his anſwers, that ſhe was wont to call him, in mirth, her

young Lord Keeper. One ſaying of his deſerves to be remembred. The Queen having aſked him his age, while he was yet a boy; he anſwered readily, that he was juſt two years younger than her happy reign.

Of his education I know no particulars, till he was ſent to ſtudy in the univerſity of Cambridge under Dr. Whitgift, afterwards Archbiſhop of Canterbury: and I find he was entered of Trinity College in his twelfth year *. The progreſs he made was rapid and uncommon: for he had run thro the whole circle of the liberal arts, as they were then taught, before he was ſixteen. But what is far more ſurpriſing; he began, even then, to ſee thro the emptineſs and futility of the philoſophy in vogue: and to conjecture, that uſeful knowledge muſt be raiſed on other foundations, and built up with other materials, than had been employed thro a tract of many Centuries backward. In this, his own genius, aided by a ſingular diſcernment, muſt have been his only preceptor: For in matters of reaſoning, the authority of Ariſtotle was ſtill acknowledged infallible in the ſchools; as much as that of

* 16th of June, 1573.

of the Pope, in affairs of religion, had lately been acknowledged there, and every where elſe. And ou Author may be juſtly ſtiled the firſt great Reformer of Philoſophy. He had the prepoſſeſſions, the voluminous and uſeleſs reading, nay he had the vanity of men grown old in contrary opinions, to ſtruggle with: yet he lived to ſee a conſiderable revolution on his ſide. Another age brought over the learned of all nations to his party.

It may be juſtly wondered at, that the Lord Keeper, a miniſter of great obſervation on men and things, ſhould have ſent his ſon to travel at the age of ſixteen; as we find he did: for, by a letter from Sir Amias Powlet, then Ambaſſador in France, it is certain that young Bacon was at Paris, and under his roof, in the year 1577. We need but look around us, to be convinced how little our youth of quality, who viſit foreign countries about that age, are wont to profit either in taſte, wiſdom, or morals. But perhaps he diſcovered in his ſon a maturity of diſcretion and judgement beyond what is common to that early ſeaſon of life. However that was, the ambaſſador conceived a very favorable opinion of Bacon; for he ſent him over to the Queen with a commiſſion

that required ſecrecy and diſpatch: of which he acquitted himſelf with applauſe, and then returned to finiſh his travels. The native bent of his mind, ſtrongly turned to reflection and enquiry, ſuffered him not to ſtop ſhort at the ſtudy of languages; but led him higher, to remark accurately on the cuſtoms and manners of thoſe that ſpoke them; on the characters of their Princes, and on the conſtitution of their ſeveral governments. In proof of this, there is ſtill extant among his works, a paper of obſervations on the general ſtate of Europe, written by him ſhortly after this time; as I have diſcovered by a circumſtance mentioned in it *.

He was the youngeſt ſon, and he ſeems to have been the favorite of his father; who had ſet apart a conſiderable ſum of money to purchaſe an eſtate for him, in his abſence. But before that kind intention could take effect, the Lord Keeper died ſuddenly, by the following accident. He was under the hands of his barber, and, the weather being ſultry, had ordered a window before him to be thrown open. As he

* He ſays that Henry III. of France was then 30 years old: now that King began his reign in 1574, at the age of 24 years. So that Bacon was then nineteen.

he was become very corpulent, he preſently fell aſleep in the current of freſh air that was blowing in upon him; and awaked after ſome time, diſtempered all over. Why, ſaid he to the ſervant, did you ſuffer me to ſleep thus expoſed? The fellow replied, that he durſt not preſume to diſturb him. Then, ſaid the Lord Keeper, by your Civility I loſe my Life: and ſo removed into his bed-chamber, where he died a few days after. Thus there remained to his youngeſt ſon only the ſmall proportion of a ſum, which was to be divided among five brothers.

The narrowneſs of his circumſtances obliged him to think of ſome profeſſion for a ſubſiſtance: and he applied himſelf, more thro neceſſity than choice, to the ſtudy of the common law. For that purpoſe he placed himſelf in the ſociety of Gray's Inn: where his ſuperior talents rendered him the ornament of the Houſe; as the gentleneſs and affability of his deportment won him the affection of all it's members. In his profeſſion he quickly roſe to ſo much eminence and reputation, that, at the age of twenty-eight years, he was named by Elizabeth her learned council extraordinary: a diſtinction which he needed no aſſiſtance from his father's merit with her to deſerve. It was

however next to impoſſible that ſo noble a genius, born to embrace the whole compaſs of ſcience, ſhould confine it's reſearches within the narrow and perplexed ſtudy of precedents and authorities: a ſtudy hedged round with brambles and thorns, dark and barbarous in it's beginnings, and rendered in it's progreſs ſtill more obſcure, by the learned dulneſs of commentators and compilers; men, for the moſt part, of indefatigable induſtry, and of no ſpirit or diſcernment. Accordingly we find that, in this interval, he often gave full ſcope to his conceptions; ſurveying the whole ſtate of learning, obſerving it's defects, and imagining the proper methods to ſupply them. This he firſt attempted in a treatiſe which he entitled THE GREATEST BIRTH OF TIME; as appears from a letter, written after his retirement, to Father Fulgentio the Venetian, in which he paſſes a kind of cenſure on the pompous and ſwelling title prefixed to it. Tho the Piece itſelf is loſt, it appears to have been the firſt outlines of that amazing deſign, which he afterwards filled up and finiſhed in his grand Inſtauration of the ſciences. As there is not a more amuſing, perhaps a more uſeful ſpeculation, than that of tracing the hiſtory of the human mind, if I may ſo expreſs

preſs my ſelf, in it's progreſſion from truth to truth, and from diſcovery to diſcovery; the intelligent reader would doubtleſs have been pleaſed to ſee, in the tract I am ſpeaking of, by what ſteps and gradations a ſpirit like Bacon's advanced in building up, for more than thirty years together, his new and univerſal theory. He thought himſelf born for the uſe of human kind; and in the letter above mentioned ſtiles himſelf, the ſervant of poſterity.

These few hints for filling up this firſt part of our Author's life, trivial and unſatisfactory as they may appear, I have yet been obliged to glean here and there in the rubbiſh of ſeveral collections, where they lay ſcattered, without order or connection. But I ſhall now no longer regard Bacon as a mere philoſopher; as a man of ſpeculation who converſed only with books and his own thoughts, in the ſhade of retirement and leiſure. The courſe of his fortunes produced him on the great theatre of the world, involved him in buſineſs, and complicated him with the moſt conſiderable perſons of the age he lived in. He was honorably employed by one Prince, and highly preferred under another. It will be therefore neceſ-

ſary, that this hiſtory may have it's due extent and uſefulneſs, to exhibit a general proſpect of the two reigns in which Bacon flouriſhed and fell, at leaſt in their principal points of view. The characters of thoſe with whom he had any connection will illuſtrate his; and ſhew it in a truer, as well as a fuller light.

I HAVE yet another reaſon for enlarging this account beyond the ordinary limits. Our Author's letters are written, many of them at leaſt, on public occaſions, and may be conſidered as the moſt authentic vouchers for ſeveral remarkable occurrences, in which he himſelf was an actor, and well acquainted with the ſecret motives on which others acted. But as thoſe things are for the moſt part only hinted at, or no farther opened than to ſerve the preſent purpoſe of his letter; they will require to be developed at ſome length, and ranged into their proper places.

ELIZABETH had a larger ſhare of good ſenſe and ſound judgment than is commonly to be met with among women; accompanied with a greatneſs of mind and ſteadineſs of purpoſe that might do honor to the beſt of men. Theſe her natural endowments received

received much, tho ſevere, improvement from the dangers ſhe was expoſed to in the firſt part of her life She grew up in a ſtrict attention over her own actions, even over her looks and words, from the rigor of her father's temper, and particularly from the jealous cruelty of her ſiſter's adminiſtration: a ſhort but memorable period of time! when England beheld, under a female reign, ſuch inſtances of mercileſs rage, ſuch ſcenes of horror, as had of old ſtartled the Roman World, under a Nero and a Domitian. The dreadful genius of that ſuperſtition, to which ſhe had devoted herſelf, then exerted it's ſpirit undiſguiſed, in betraying, tormenting, butchering, by the miniſtry of inhuman prieſts and inquiſitors, whoever would not profeſs what he could not poſſibly believe. If we may credit hiſtorians, they had even doomed Elizabeth herſelf to die: and ſhe eſcaped, miraculouſly, not by the kindneſs, but the policy of Philip; himſelf a tyrant, the cooleſt and moſt determined of theſe latter ages.

At her acceſſion to the throne, ſhe found her revenues anticipated or exhauſted; her kingdom, thro the pernitious bigottry of her predeceſſor, diſjointed and broken of it's vigor within: at the ſame

time unſupported by allies, and without conſideration abroad. Her good ſenſe led her to ſee, by the errors of her father and her ſiſter, that ſhe could expect to reign with ſecurity, only by deſerving the confidence and gaining the love of the nation: and that in order thereto, ſhe muſt propoſe to herſelf no other end of ruling but the happineſs and honor of all her people. This ſyſtem of policy, ſo ſimple in itſelf, ſo glorious in it's conſequences, and yet by princes ſo ſeldom purſued, ſhe adhered to ſteadily, almoſt uniformly, thro a long and triumphant reign: for this very reaſon triumphant.

THE reformation of religion ſhe attempted and effected; at a ſeaſon when her power was unconfirmed, and in probable danger from inteſtine commotions. For revolutions in religion are apt to put the whole conſtitution of a ſociety into ferment, even more ſtrongly than alterations in government; as every individual is immediately and intimately actuated by what ſeems to him of higheſt and moſt laſting concern. She kept awake, and animated, with wonderful addreſs, the diviſions in Scotland, in France, in the Netherlands: and that with more juſtice on her

part

part than is uſually obſerved by princes when they would do ill offices to their neighbours. The ſovereigns of thoſe countries, when they agreed in nothing elſe, were ever combined in a common enmity to her: at a time too when ſhe had nothing to oppoſe againſt their pretenſions, their conſpiracies, their open attacks, but her own courage and the native ſtrength of England alone. And yet, by helping forward the reformation in Scotland; by ſupporting the proteſtants in France; by the wiſe and well-managed ſupplies ſhe ſent to the Dutch, who were ſtruggling hard for their lives and liberties with an unrelenting tyrant: by this ſeries of conduct, ſteadily purſued, ſhe triumphed over all oppoſition, and rendered herſelf the arbitreſs of Europe. For it may be affirmed, that her adminiſtration made a greater impreſſion on all the ſtates round her, than it received itſelf from any: an undoubted proof of it's firmneſs and active vigor.

When ſhe came to the crown, ſhe found the nation four millions in debt: a ſum then almoſt incredible! and yet her oeconomy alone enabled her to diſcharge it. The coin, which had been much embaſed by Henry the Eighth, and by Mary wholly neglected, ſhe quickly reſtored to it's juſt ſtandard; and therewith

with the public faith and credit. Her magazines ſhe carefully repleniſhed with arms, ammunition, warlike ſtores of every kind: and the youth all over England were ordered to be duly trained in military exerciſes. Her navy was fallen to decay, and almoſt abandoned. This ſhe ſet herſelf to repair, with an attention, which the great bulwark of this kingdom will ever deſerve from a prince, who underſtands in what his own ſtrength and that of his dominions naturally conſiſt. Her fleet was at laſt a match for the mighty Armada of Spain: that Armada boaſted to be invincible, and which was in truth a deſperate effort of the whole power and reſentment of her bittereſt enemy. Her victory over him, as entire as it was glorious, gave ſecurity and renown to this Iſland: and, whatever the partiality of foreign writers may have inſinuated to the contrary, ſhe owed it to her own heroical conduct, and the unexampled bravery of her ſubjects.

SHE was the firſt of our princes who purſued, in any conſiderable degree, the only ſure method of making England great and powerful; by encouraging and extending our commerce: which, under her protection, grew high, and ſpread itſelf thro the North and

and to both the Indies. In a word, ſuch was her conduct, ſuch her good fortune, in this iſland and on the Continent, that her allies had the ſtrongeſt confidence in her aſſiſtance and good faith: that her enemies ſtood in awe of her power, and were forced to an unwilling approbation of her prudence. The applauſe of ſuch as think they have cauſe to hate, and diſtreſs us, is the ſincereſt, as it is the nobleſt praiſe. Her oeconomy was admirable. She huſbanded the public money for her people's eaſe: ſhe laid it out, on proper occaſions, for their ſafety and honor. The undertakings of the government were never greater; the charge was never leſs. This gives the higheſt idea of her miniſtry, and places their characters, in general, above imputation or reproach.

Of Sir Nicholas Bacon, our Author's father, I have already given ſome acccount: and ſhall only add here, that he never aſpired beyond the rank he brought with him to court. His moderation in all other reſpects was the ſame. When the Queen viſited him at his ſeat in Hertfordſhire, ſhe told him with an air of pleaſantry, that his houſe was too little for him. No, replied the Lord Keeper; but your Majeſty has made me too great for my houſe.

WALSINGHAM, in his private character, was of unblemiſhed honeſty. As a miniſter he had ſingular ſagacity in procuring intelligence; which he knew to apply, with great dexterity, to the purpoſes of government: devoting himſelf, with ſo generous a ſelf-neglect, to the ſervice of his country, that he gained a reputation for contempt of riches, which would have been highly reverenced in the beſt times of antiquity; and will go near, in theſe days, to be thought either folly or frenzy.

THE Lord Treaſurer Burleigh, for his conſummate abilities as a ſtateſman, was reckoned the firſt name of his age: and is ſtill pointed out as a pattern, which we rather wiſh, than expect, to ſee fully copied by his ſucceſſors in power. As he had ſtrong natural parts, and was of unwearied application to buſineſs, his experience muſt have been univerſal and unequalled; for he was at the head of the government almoſt forty years. He ſeems, in particular, to have been eminently poſſeſſed of that intrepidity of head, that civil courage, ſo neceſſary in a great miniſter: and without which no miniſter will never do any thing truly noble, or of laſting utility to mankind. Inviolably

lably attached to his miſtreſs, he ſerved her with equal fidelity and ſucceſs: and had the ſingular felicity to promote the good of his country by the ſame arts that he employed to gratify the inclinations of his ſovereign.

THE glory of this princeſs will receive a new luſtre by comparing the ſtate of England with that of almoſt all other nations in Europe, at the ſame time. It muſt have been no common addition to the tranquility and happineſs of our anceſtors, that they enjoyed both, uninterrupted, for ſuch a length of years; while Scotland and France, Spain and Holland, were torn with continual diviſions, and bleeding by the wounds of foreign and domeſtic wars. Hers too was the age of heroes both in arts and arms. Great captains, able ſtateſmen, writers of the higheſt order aroſe, and under her influence flouriſhed together. Thus Bacon had all the incentives that could kindle him up to a generous ambition, and quicken his emulation in the purſuit of knowledge and honeſt fame. And indeed his letters remain a proof, that if he courted the proper opportunities of raiſing his fortune, he loſt none that

that might improve and enlarge his mind *. As the Lord Treaſurer had married his aunt, we find him frequent in his applications to that miniſter for ſome place of credit and ſervice in the ſtate. He profeſſes too, that his views on this head are as moderate, as his aims another way are ambitious and vaſt; for that he had taken all philoſophy for his province. The Treaſurer intereſted himſelf ſo far on his behalf as to procure for him, againſt violent oppoſition, the office of Regiſter to the Star-Chamber, worth about 1600l. a year: but it was only in reverſion, and did not fall to him till near twenty years afterwards. Neither did he obtain any other preferment all this reign: tho his winning addreſs, his eloquence, his large and ſyſtematical learning had raiſed him to the admiration of the greateſt men at court. He was particularly eſteemed and patronized by Robert Devereux, the famous and unfortunate Earl of Eſſex; to whom he attached himſelf in his younger years, and by whoſe intereſt in the Queen, he flattered himſelf with the proſpect of bettering his condition. Elizabeth herſelf ſhewed him ſeveral marks of diſtinction, admitted him often to her preſence, and even conſulted him on the ſtate

* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 7.

ſtate of hers affairs: as her miniſters ſometimes made uſe of his pen in the vindication of her government. And yet, notwithſtanding theſe fair appearances, he met with no preferment from that queen anſwerable to the idea we have of his merit, or her diſcernment in the diſtribution of favors. This deſerves ſome explanation; as it will diſcover to us the true genius of thoſe miniſters, who, pretending to merit themſelves, are jealous of it in all other men: who are equally poor ſpirited and aſpiring.

THE whole court was at this time rent into factions, headed on one part by the Earl of Eſſex; on the other by the Cecils, father and ſon. Eſſex was then in all the flower of his youth, and remarkable for the gracefulneſs of his perſon. In his nature brave, ambitious, popular: and what is uncommon, at once the favorite of the Sovereign and of the Nation. Fond of military glory; liberal to profuſion; devoted entirely to his friends, and keeping no meaſures with his enemies; of competent learning himſelf, and a ſignal benefactor to learned men. One quality he had, which diſtinguiſhes him eminently from ſuch as are perſonally beloved by princes:

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in the height of his favor he received the admonitions, the remonſtrances of his friends with all gentleneſs; and was ever moſt patient of the truth. But then he wanted thoſe arts which are moſt neceſſary in a courtier; and are indeed the only qualities which the rabble of courtiers value themſelves upon; circumſpection, cunning, affectation of ſecrecy, with a ſervile obſequiouſneſs to the humors of their ſuperiors, and a mean but anxious attention to their own intereſt, whether at the expence of their patrons, or of their country. A different turn of mind gave the Earl's enemies great advantages againſt him. They failed not to repreſent to the Queen, on ſeveral occaſions, that this young Lord, not ſatisfied with the diſtinction of being her favorite, pretended to be her maſter; and preſcribed to her judgment on affairs of ſtate, with a haughtineſs ill becoming the diſtance betwixt a Sovereign, and the creature of her bounty. Such inſinuations, as they were partly true, could not fail of making an impreſſion on Elizabeth, who was naturally high ſpirited, and infinitely jealous of her authority. Tho ſhe had a particular fondneſs for the Earl, ſhe took occaſion every now and then to mortify his pride by refuſing to advance thoſe friends of his

his whom he recommended for preferment. After his return from the expedition to Cadiz, in which he had behaved himſelf with much gallantry, ſhe raiſed his enemy, Sir Robert Cecil, to be Secretary of State; tho he had earneſtly ſolicited that poſt for another. He had often applied to her in behalf of Bacon, and aſked for him, with all the warmth of friendſhip, the place of Solicitor General; but had been always refuſed. Cecil, who mortally hated Eſſex, and had entertained a ſecret jealouſy of Bacon, on account of his ſuperior talents, repreſented the latter to the Queen as a man of mere ſpeculation; as one wholly given up to philoſophical enquiries, new indeed and amuſing, but fanciful and unſolid: and therefore more likely to diſtract her affairs than to ſerve her uſefully and with proper judgment. Bacon however was this man's couſin-german; his father and the Lord Burleigh having married two ſiſters: but Ambition knows neither merit nor relation. This unworthy treatment from ſo near a kinſman, carried Bacon into very free expoſtulations on his courtly artifices, as he endeavoured in ſecret to cruſh the man whom yet he pretended openly to ſerve: and theſe repeated diſappointments ſunk ſo deep into his ſpirit, that he was ſeveral times on the point of retiring for ever, and

even

even of hiding his grief and reſentment in ſome foreign country. Eſſex, who could but ill brook the mortification of a denial, finding himſelf unable to ſerve his friend in a public way, would needs make up the loſs to him out of his own private fortune: and if we may believe Buſhel*, he beſtowed upon him about this time Twitenham-Park and it's garden of Paradiſe. Whether it was that or ſome other of his lands, the donation was ſo very conſiderable, that Bacon, as himſelf acknowledges in his apology, ſold it afterwards, even at an under price, for no leſs than eighteen hundred pounds. A bounty ſo noble, accompanied too, as we know it was, with all thoſe agreeable diſtinctions that to a mind, delicately ſenſible, are more obliging than the bounty it ſelf, muſt kindle in the breaſt of a good man the moſt ardent ſentiments of gratitude, and create an inviolable attachment to ſuch a benefactor. What then are we to think of Bacon, when we find him, after this nobleman's unhappy fate, publiſhing to all England a declaration of the treaſons of Robert Earl of Eſſex? This behaviour drew upon him a heavy and general hatred at that time; which was not extinguiſhed even by his death, but continues ſtill, in the writings of

* Buſhel's abridg. poſt. p. 1.

of more than one hiſtorian, an imputation on his memory. As this tranſaction is of importance to his moral character, I will lay it before the reader as impartially as I can.

ELIZABETH had raiſed that young Lord, thro a ſeries of honors, to be Earl Marſhal of England: and was every day giving him new proofs of a particular and uncommon eſteem. This only ſerved to exaſperate his enemies. They were powerful, and cloſely united. But as they durſt not attack him openly, they had recourſe to dark and ſurer arts of vengeance; againſt which his openneſs of temper, unſuſpecting and improvident, was no wiſe guarded. In truth, his imperious humour, which he could ſeldom diſguiſe, aided their deſigns; for it often broke forth into downright abuſe and ſcorn of thoſe who thwarted his projects, or diſſented from his opinions: and he once, in ſome diſpute with the Queen herſelf, turned his back abruptly upon her with all the marks of diſreſpect and contempt. Provoked at this inſolence, Elizabeth, forgetting her ſex and the dignity of her character, ſtruck the Earl a box on the ear: which he on his part, with a meanneſs of paſſion yet leſs excuſable

cuſable in a man, reſented ſo highly as to lay his hand on his ſword, againſt a woman and his ſovereign. No ſubſequent favors could wear this imaginary affront out of his memory; tho ſhe pardoned him the inſult that occaſioned it, and ſent him ſhortly after into Ireland, as her vicegerent, with a commiſſion almoſt unlimited. His conduct there has not eſcaped the cenſure of hiſtorians, who have remarked ſeverely on the unjuſtifiable treaty he made with the arch-rebel Tyrone, on the private conference they held together, and on his precipitate return to England, againſt the Queen's expreſs orders. This laſt ill ſtep he was betrayed into, if we may believe Oſborn*, by an artifice of Cecil: who firſt inflamed Elizabeth's ſuſpicions of the Earl, and then ſtopped all veſſels that were to ſail for Ireland except one which he ordered thither on purpoſe with a feigned report of her death. Fatally deceived by this intelligence, Eſſex ſailed away in a hurry for England, attended only by a few of his friends. The Queen received him without any emotion either of anger or affection, and having confined him to his own houſe, ordered his conduct to be examined in the ſtar-chamber. At this uſage of him, however gracious and moderate, the people, whoſe idol

* Mem. of Q. Eliz. p. 458.

idol he was, loudly exclaimed: and their unſeaſonable partiality, repreſented by his adverſaries as of dangerous tendency to the ſtate, kindled anew the Queen's indignation againſt him. Thus, that popularity he had ſo eagerly courted, and ſo much depended upon, ſerved now only to haſten forward his deſtruction. He was ſentenced by the council to be removed from his place at that board; to be ſuſpended from his offices of Earl Marſhal and Maſter of the ordinance, and to be impriſoned during the Queen's pleaſure. Having humbled him thus far, ſhe ſtopt ſhort; forbidding his ſentence to be entered on record, and ſtill continuing him Maſter of the Horſe. She even gave him the full enjoyment of his liberty, upon his expreſſing a perfect reſignation to her pleaſure; but withal adviſed him to be his own keeper. His ſeeming repentance was of ſhort duration; for upon the Queen's refuſal to grant him the farm of ſweet wines, which he had very imprudently petitioned for, he returned out of the country, and again abandoned himſelf to all the impetuoſity of his temper; or rather to the pernitious ſuggeſtions of his followers. Indeed, the preſumption that naturally grows out of ſucceſsful ambition, and the intereſted

counſels of thoſe whoſe fortunes were involved with his, ſeem to have entirely turned his head: for his actions henceforward were the genuine effects of frenzy and deſpair. In conjunction with his friends, of ſeveral conditions, he meditated no leſs an attempt than to ſeize on the palace, to make himſelf maſter of the Queen's perſon, and to baniſh from about her all thoſe whom he reputed his enemies. Never was conſpiracy ſo ill laid, or conducted with ſo little probability of ſucceſs. The court was preſently alarmed, his houſe inveſted, himſelf and his friends made priſoners, without any reſiſtance on his part; for tho he was embarked in a kind of rebellion, he knew not how to be a rebel. The particulars of his trial are foreign to my purpoſe. It was managed againſt him by Sir Edward Coke, the Attorney-General, and by Bacon as one of the Queen's Council. It ought not to be forgot that the former treated this unfortunate * Nobleman with a ſtrain of petulant dulneſs and ſcurrility that makes us contemn his talent as a pleader, while we abhor the purpoſe to which he made it ſubſervient. Bacon was more moderate and decent. The crime was proved by a cloud of witneſſes: and the unanimous ſuffrage

* State Tryals, vol. I. p. 205.

of

of his peers found him guilty. After his ſentence he appeared wholly indifferent to life or death: tho the Queen ſeemed ſtill irreſolute, or rather inclining to ſave him. He died with the tenderneſs of a penitent, and the firmneſs of a hero: tho the Marſhal de Biron jeſted on his deportment in that laſt ſcene of life, as ſuiting rather a monk than a ſoldier.

THE untimely fate of this nobleman, who died on a ſcaffold in the prime and vigor of his years, excited univerſal pity, and was murmured againſt by all conditions of people. Their reflections on the prevailing party at court, even on the queen herſelf, were ſo bold and injurious, that the adminiſtration thought it neceſſary to vindicate their conduct in a public appeal to the people *. This taſk was aſſigned to Bacon, even then in high eſteem for his excellencies as a writer. Some ſay it was by his enemies inſidiouſly impoſed on him, to divert the national reſentment from themſelves upon a particular perſon, who was known to have lived in friendſhip with Eſſex, and whom they intended to ruin in the

* V. a declaration of the treaſons of R. Earl of Eſſex, Vol. IV. p. 386.

general eſteem. If ſuch was their intention, they ſucceeded but too well in it: never man incurred more univerſal or more laſting cenſure than Bacon by this writing. He was every where traduced as one who endeavoured to murder the good name of his benefactor, after the miniſtry had deſtroyed his perſon. His life was even threatened: and he went in daily hazard of aſſaſſination. This obliged him to publiſh, in his own defence, the apology we find among his writings. It is long and elaborate; but not, perhaps, in every part ſatisfactory. Let us believe him on his own teſtimony *, that he had never done that Nobleman any ill offices with the queen; tho ſhe herſelf had, it ſeems, inſinuated the contrary: that on the other hand he had always, during the time of their intimacy, given him advice no leſs uſeful than ſincere; that he had wiſhed, nay, endeavoured, the Earl's preſervation even at laſt, purely from affection to him, without any regard to his own intereſt in that endeavour: let all this be allowed; ſome blemiſh will ſtill remain on his character.

Essex deſerved the fate he underwent; but he had paid his debt to juſtice: and the commonwealth had

* Apology, Vol. IV. p. 429.

now

now nothing to fear from any of his party. The declaration above mentioned could therefore be intended, only to ſtill the preſent clamors of the multitude: and tho the matter of it might be true, Bacon was not the man who ſhould have publiſhed thoſe truths. He had been long and highly indebted to the Earl's friendſhip, almoſt beyond the example even of that age. In another man this proceeding might not have been blameable: in him it cannot be excuſed. Sir Henry Yelverton, in the next reign, ventured on the diſpleaſure both of the King and his minion, rather than do the miniſtry of his office *, by pleading againſt the Earl of Somerſet, who had made him Solicitor-General. Had Bacon refuſed that invidious part, there were others, among the herd of aſpiring and officious Lawyers, ready enough to have performed it: and his very enemies muſt have thought more advantageouſly of him for declining a taſk, in itſelf of no eſſential importance to the ſtate, and in him unjuſt to friendſhip, obligation, gratitude, the moſt ſacred regards among men.

Elizabeth ſurvived her favorite about a year: and, if we may credit Oſborn †, grief and remorſe

* Aul. Coqui. p. 186. † Oſborn, p. 459.

for his fate accompanied her to the grave*. She died the twenty fourth of March 1603, in the fulneſs of days and honor. Her reign had been long and triumphant: and ſhe had thro the whole courſe of it preſerved, what ſhe ſo juſtly merited, the love and veneration of her people; the trueſt glory, the rareſt felicity of a Sovereign. Her ſucceſſor was James the Sixth of Scotland, under whom Bacon aſcended, by ſeveral ſteps, to the higheſt dignity of the law.

THIS prince, the moſt unwarlike that ever lived, was born in the midſt of civil commotions, at a time when his whole kingdom was torn into factions, betwixt the party who had eſpouſed the intereſts of his mother, and thoſe who had declared for him. After he had taken the adminiſtration into his own hands, he was hardly ever his own maſter; ſuffering himſelf to be led implicitely by the cabal in whoſe power he then happened to be. The moment he thought himſelf at liberty from either, like a boy eſcaped from under the eye of a rigid preceptor, he forgot all his uneaſineſſes, and abandoned himſelf to his favorite amuſements of hawking and hunting, as if his kingdom had been in the profoundeſt tranquility. He

* He is the firſt author who mentions the ſtory of the ring.

grew

grew up in an unaccountable fondneſs for favorites. The firſt, who took deep root with him, was likewiſe the worſt; not only encouraging him in a total inapplication to buſineſs, but tincturing his youth with the poiſon of all debauchery. The name of this man was Stuart *, afterwards Earl of Arran; one who had great and dangerous vices, without a ſingle virtue, private or public, to attone for them: an open ſcoffer at the obligations of morality, inſolent, rapacious, ſanguinary; hated by, and hating, all good men. The honeſter part of the nobility often remonſtrated againſt the credit and pernitious influence of this minion: James acknowledged the juſtice of their remonſtrances; baniſhed him ſeveral times from court; and ſeveral times received him into new favor. He was at length ſhot † by a private hand in revenge for the death of the Earl of Morton, to which he had baſely contributed.

JAMES hated the church of Scotland: and confirmed it's authority ‡. He declared the attempt of thoſe Lords, who had reſcued him out of the hands of Arran and Lennox, to be juſt and ſerviceable §: he afterwards baniſhed them, and would have confiſ-

* Melvil's Mem. p. 131. † P. 200. ‡ P. 132. § P. 139.

cated their eſtates on that very account. When they had made themſelves maſters of his perſon a ſecond time, he pronounced them all traitors; and pardoned them *.

ELIZABETH, who knew his genius perfectly, ſent Mr. Wotton on an embaſſy to him in 1585. Her intention was to divert him from a marriage with the princeſs of Denmark, and to give his counſels what other turn her intereſts might require. The ambaſſador, a man of addreſs and intrigue, had, by long habitude, learnt to perſonate all characters, and to aſſume, with an eaſe that ſeemed altogether unaffected, whatever ſhape might ſerve moſt effectually the purpoſes of his ſuperiors †. At the age of twenty-one he had been employed to ſound the intentions of the court of France; and had well nigh duped the famous Conſtable de Montmorency, a miniſter grown grey in the obſervation of human falſehood and artifice. To his natural talent he had now added the experience of thirty years more. By accompanying King James in his ſports; by falling in frankly, and as it were naturally, with all his paſſions; by making a jeſt of buſineſs; by entertaining him

* Melvil, p. 169. † P. 161.

plea-

pleaſantly with an account of foreign faſhions and follies; this man gained an abſolute aſcendant not only over his underſtanding, but over his humor. His moſt faithful ſubjects, who had ſerved him longeſt and beſt, who had even warned him againſt the ſubtleties of this ſtranger, he received with approbation or diſlike, juſt as Wotton inſpired him *. He was even brought by him to be ſeriouſly perſuaded, that the King of Denmark was deſcended from a race of merchants: and that an alliance with his daughter was, therefore, infinitely beneath a King of Scotland's dignity.

Such was the Prince who now mounted that throne, which Elizabeth had filled with ſo great capacity and reputation. The union of the two crowns, in the perſon of one Sovereign, was extremely dreaded by foreigners, and in particular by Henry the Fourth of France. The acceſſion of a new kingdom to the native force of England, which even alone had been long formidable on the continent; the alliance of James with the moſt potent monarch of the North; his relation to the houſe of Lorrain, which had lately embroiled all France, rendered ſuch fears very pro-

* Melvil, p. 164.

bable. But his conduct diſſipated them for ever: and all Europe quickly ſaw, that no people but his own had any thing to apprehend from his power. At his arrival in England, he beſtowed titles and honors with ſo wild a profuſion, that there hardly remained any other mark of diſtinction but that of having eſcaped them. The public ſtood amazed *: and paſquinades were openly affixed, undertaking to aſſiſt weaker memories to a competent knowledge of the Nobility. Sir Francis Bacon, who had been early in his homage, and application for favor, to the new Sovereign, was knighted by him in perſon: and has left us the following picture of him, ſtrongly touched in it's moſt obvious features †. "His ſpeech, ſays he, "is ſwift and curſory; and in the full dialect of his "country: in matters of buſineſs, ſhort; in general "diſcourſe, large. He affecteth popularity, by gra-"cing ſuch as he hath heard to be popular; not by "any faſhions of his own. He is thought ſomewhat "general in his favors: and his eaſineſs of acceſs is "rather becauſe he is much abroad and in a croud, "than that he giveth eaſy audience. He haſteneth to "a mixture of both kingdoms and occaſions faſter, "perhaps, than policy will well bear."

* Wilſon, p. 7. † Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 73.

In 1605, Sir Francis Bacon recommended himſelf to the king's particular notice, as well as to the general eſteem of his cotemporaries, by publiſhing a work he had long meditated; The Progreſs and Advancement of Learning. The great aim of this treatiſe, no leſs original in the deſign than happy in the execution, was to ſurvey accurately the whole ſtate and extent of the intellectual world; what parts of it had been unſucceſsfully cultivated; what lay ſtill neglected, or unknown: and by what methods theſe might be diſcovered, and thoſe improved, to the farther advantage of ſociety and human nature. By expoſing the errors and imperfections of our knowledge, he led mankind into the only right way of reforming the one, and ſupplying the other: he taught them to know their wants. He even went farther, and himſelf pointed out to them general methods of correction and improvement in the whole circle of arts and ſciences. This work he firſt publiſhed in Engliſh: but to render it of more extenſive uſe, he recommended a tranſlation of it into Latin* to Dr. Playfer of Cambridge. Playfer, with the ſcrupulous accuracy of a grammarian, was more attentive to faſhion his ſtile to purity and roundneſs of periods,

* Tenniſon's Baconiana, p. 25.

made out of the phraſeology he had gleaned from claſſic writers, than to render his author's meaning in plain and maſculine language. After the ſight of a ſpecimen or two, Sir Francis did not encourage him to proceed in it. He himſelf, after his retirement, very much enlarged and corrected the original; and with the aſſiſtance of ſome friends turned the whole into Latin. This is the edition of 1623 *; and ſtands as the firſt part to his great Inſtauration of the Sciences.

I HAVE already obſerved that Cecil, now Earl of Saliſbury, oppoſed the progreſs of our author's fortune under Elizabeth: and he ſeems to have obſerved the ſame conduct towards him in the preſent reign, till he had fixed himſelf in the king's confidence ſo firmly as to be above all fear of a rival. Beſides him, Sir Francis Bacon found a violent and laſting enemy in a man of his own profeſſion, Sir Edward Coke †; who, with great parts, had many and ſignal failings. The quarrel betwixt them ſeems to have been perſonal: and it laſted to the end of their lives. Coke was jealous of Bacon's reputation in many parts of knowledge: by whom, again, he was envied for the

* Tenniſon's Baconina, p. 27. † Stephen's Collec. p. 9.

high

high reputation he had acquired in one; each aiming to be admired, particularly for that in which the other excelled. This affectation in two extraordinary men has ſomething in it very mean, and is not uncommon. The former was the greateſt lawyer of his time; but could be nothing more. If the latter was not ſo, we can aſcribe it only to his aiming at a more exalted character. The univerſality of his genius could not be confined within one inferior province of learning. If learning thus divided is not ſo proper to raiſe a ſingular name in one way, it ſerves to enlarge the underſtanding on every ſide, and to enlighten it in all it's views. As the name of Sir Edward Coke will occur oftner than once in this hiſtory, and as he ſtood in particular competition to Bacon, I beg leave to dwell a little longer on his character. In his pleadings he was apt to inſult over miſery. Of this we have a deteſtable inſtance in his behaviour to Sir Walter Raleigh *. He inveighed againſt that brave man on his tryal with all the bitterneſs of cruelty, and in a ſtile of ſuch abandoned railing, as bordered almoſt on fury: I wiſh I could not add, that this bitterneſs, this intemperance of tongue, ſeem to be the genuine effuſions of his

* State Tryals, Vol. I. p. 207, &c.

heart.

heart *. He converſed it ſeems more with books than men; and among the latter, with thoſe only to whom he could dictate and give the law. The conſequence of which was, that his converſation had all the air of a lecture; and that he retailed for new, a hundred ſtories that were either ſtale or trivial. He affected raillery, which was by no means his talent. His wit was often ill aimed, as it was always indelicate and vulgar; the rough horſe-play of a pedant. Tho he had accumulated immenſe wealth, in his profeſſion and by ſeveral rich marriages, he was of a ſordid avarice; a ſevere maſter, a griping landlord. In proſperity inſolent; dejected and fawning in adverſity: the ſame poorneſs of ſpirit influencing his behaviour in both conditions. One example of this may ſerve in place of ſeveral. After his diſgrace, he ſubmiſſively courted Buckingham's brother to a match

* The offices of Attorney and Sollicitor-General have been rocks upon which many aſpiring Lawyers have made ſhipwreck of their virtue and human nature. Some of thoſe Gentlemen have acted at the bar as if they thought themſelves, by the duty of their places, abſolved from all the obligations of truth, honor, and decency. But their names are upon record, and will be tranſmitted to after-ages with thoſe characters of reproach and abhorrence that are due to the worſt ſort of murderers; thoſe that murder under the ſanction of juſtice.

with

with his daughter: in the height of his favor, he had rejected the ſame propoſal with ſcorn. His profound ſkill in the common law has been univerſally allowed: and to this we cannot have a more unqueſtionable witneſs than Sir Francis Bacon *; one every way fit to judge, and an enemy. He was raiſed to be Chief Juſtice of the Common Pleas in 1606, and of the King's Bench in 1613. On the Bench he was above corruption; and had this ſaying frequently in his mouth, that a Judge ſhould neither give nor take a bribe. In the caſe of Peacham †, in the buſineſs of commendams, he behaved himſelf with the honeſty and firmneſs of one who knew that a Judge ought neither to be flattered nor menaced out of his integrity. Towards the latter part of his life, he ſtruck in with the country party in parliament, and ſtood in the breach againſt the arbitrary meaſures of James and Charles. He died in the reign of the latter, aged 86 years.

At length Sir Francis Bacon obtained the place he had ſo long expected: and in 1607 was declared Solicitor-General. This preferment was the effect of

* Vol. IV. p. 3. † Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 145.

many

many letters and much inſtance on his part, to the Earl of Saliſbury, the Lord Chancellor Egerton, and the King himſelf. Neither do I find that he was ever promoted to any poſt without repeated and earneſt application to miniſters and favorites: a reflection that may ſerve, at once to mortify, and inſtruct, an ambitious man of parts.

JAMES had, from the beginning of his reign, paſſionately deſired an union of Scotland and England: but his unreaſonable partiality to the former, reckoning it as an equal half of the iſland, rendered the deſign abortive. Tho Sir Francis Bacon labored this argument with all the arts of wit and reaſon, his eloquence, powerful as it was, had no effect on the houſe of Commons. The Parliament even ſhewed itſelf averſe to this union, in proportion as the Court appeared zealous for it. The new Sovereign's conduct had alarmed them. They ſaw, that, with a ſtrong diſpoſition to be profuſe, he was abſolutely in the power of favorites: and that ſome of the leaſt valuable among his ſubjects were moſt in his favor. They ſaw farther, that he began already to propagate maxims of government deſtructive to liberty, and inconſiſtent

conſiſtent with the whole tenor of the conſtitution. Theſe things filled obſerving men with apprehenſions for the future, which unhappily were but too well founded. The whole ſum of his politics, both now and afterwards, was to diſtaſte and alienate his ſubjects at home; to diſhonor both himſelf and them abroad. It was a reign of embaſſies and negociations, alike fruitleſs and expenſive: a reign of favorites and proclamations, of idle amuſements and arbitrary impoſitions. It was beſides the great æra of flattery. The ancient national ſimplicity of manners which ever accompanies magnanimity, and manly freedom of ſpeech the noble effect of both, were now in a great meaſure loſt; altered and effeminated into proſtitute adulation and ſervile homage. This was become the faſhionable language among the Clergy as well as Laity; and James heard himſelf daily addreſſed to, by the titles of ſacred and divine: titles which diſcover the meanneſs rather than the dignity of human nature; and which, applied to him, were glaringly ridiculous. He had not one princely quality. The arts of governing a kingdom in peace he either did not, or would not underſtand: and his horror of war was conſtitutional and unconquerable. It may therefore

therefore ſeem unaccountable, that a king of this temper ſhould treat his parliaments with more haughtineſs than any of his predeceſſors had ever done. But he had been told that England was neither to be exhauſted nor provoked: and his actions ſhewed that he believed ſo, according to the letter. The truth is, that as puſillanimity will talk bigger on ſome occaſions than true valor on any, he meant to make himſelf formidable to his people, that they might not diſcover how much he was afraid of them.

THO he did not ſucceed in the union of the kingdoms, he found his judges, in an affair of a ſimilar kind, more complaiſant than the great council of the nation had been: I mean the naturalization of all Scotſmen born ſince his acceſſion to the throne of England. This was adjudged by Sir Edward Coke in the great caſe of Calvin *; as it had been argued at large before all the Judges by Sir Francis Bacon. The affair is now no longer of importance to either kingdom: but one aſſertion of our author, on that occaſion, ought not to be forgot. He roundly affirms, that monarchies do not ſubſiſt like other go-

* Caſe of the Poſt-nati, Vol. IV. p. 185.

vernments,

vernments, by a precedent law; and that ſubmiſſion to them is grounded upon nature.

In 1610 he publiſhed another treatiſe, entitled, Of the Wiſdom of the ancients. This work bears the ſame ſtamp of an original and inventive genius with his other performances. Reſolving not to tread in the ſteps of thoſe who had gone before him, men, according to his own expreſſion, not learned beyond certain common places; he ſtrikes out a new tract for himſelf, and enters into the moſt ſecret receſſes of this wild and ſhadowy region; ſo as to appear new on a known and beaten ſubject. Upon the whole, if we cannot bring ourſelves readily to believe that there is all the phyſical, moral, and political meaning veiled under thoſe fables of antiquity, which he has diſcovered in them, we muſt own that it required no common penetration to be miſtaken with ſo great an appearance of ingenuity on his ſide. Tho it ſtill remains doubtful whether the Ancients were ſo knowing as he attempts to ſhew they were, the variety and depth of his own knowledge are, in that very attempt, unqueſtionable.

HOBART being advanced to the place of Chief Juſtice of the Common Pleas, Sir Francis Bacon ſucceeded him as Attorney General in 1613; about three months after the death of his kinſman and enemy the Lord Treaſurer Saliſbury: a miniſter fertile in expedients for ſupplying his maſter's wants, and well acquainted with the temper of England: a man of dexterity, craft, and intrigue, rather than a great man. The office that Bacon now entered upon was of exorbitant profit for that age. He owns, in one of his letters to the King, that it was worth to him 6000l. a year: and his employment of Regiſter to the Star-Chamber, which I mentioned above, now brought him in 1600l. a year more. By what fatality was it that ſo extraordinary a man did not add to his other virtues that of a reaſonable oeconomy? Had he done ſo, it had preſerved him from one tranſcendent fault: and the other blemiſhes on his moral name had been loſt in the brightneſs of his intellectual qualities. But he was remarkably ſubject to the ſame weakneſs that ſo much diſhooured his maſter. His dependents had him wholly in their power, and ſquandered his fortune away, ſhamefully and without meaſure. In a private family, this begot diſorder, neceſſity, corruption: and

and all England beheld, from the ſame management in adminiſtring the public, the ſame effects; only more felt and fatal, as they were univerſal.

It was not however till the year 1611 that James abandoned himſelf to one ſole favorite. About that time was brought to court Robert Car a Scotſman, then in the firſt bloom of his youth, and of diſtinguiſhed beauty; by which he at once engaged the King's attention, and in a little while engroſſed all his affection. As he was wholly illiterate, James himſelf would needs be his preceptor: and it muſt have been a ſcene altogether new and ridiculous, to ſee the ſovereign of three kingdoms daily inſtructing, in the firſt elements of grammar, the man who was ſhortly after to govern thoſe kingdoms. In his bounty to this ſtripling, he obſerved no other meaſure but that of his paſſion, which was as extreme as it ſeemed unaccountable. Car, in four or five years of favor, from a mere adventurer was raiſed to be Earl of Somerſet *: and amaſſed an enormous eſtate of nineteen thouſand pounds a year in land; beſides plate, money, and jewels to the amount of two hun-

* Truth brought to light, p. 89.

dred

dred thouſand pounds more ‡. And here I cannot omit taking notice, that the foundations of this minion's greatneſs were laid in the ruin of another ſubject; of one who deſerved, and would have met with very different treatment from a ſovereign, to whom eminent public talents had not been formidable, and therefore hateful. I mean Sir Walter Raleigh, then a priſoner in the tower. Him the King robbed of his lands, by a ſhameful artifice of the law, to beſtow them on Car, who, by accepting, ſhewed how little he merited this bounty*: and whoſe name would ſcarce have found a place in hiſtory, had it not been for his vices; for his ſcandalous amour with the counteſs of Eſſex; for procuring her to be divorced from her huſband, and for combining with her to poiſon his friend who had diſſuaded him from that ill ſtep. The fate of Sir Thomas Overbury; the dark and

‡ This account is probably exaggerated.

* When the Lady Raleigh and her children on their knees implored the King's compaſſion, they could get no other anſwer from him, but that he mun ha the land, he mun ha it for Car. But let it be remembred too, that Prince Henry, who had all the amiable qualities his father wanted, never left ſoliciting him, till he had obtained the manor of Sherborne, with an intention to reſtore it to Raleigh it's juſt owner: tho by his untimely death this good intention did not take effect. Ral. life, p. 164, 165.

dreadful

dreadful ſcene of guilt that uſhered it in; and the part thoſe two great criminals acted in that tragedy, are recounted by all hiſtorians. Tho the horrible tranſaction lay yet wrapt up in darkneſs, and was not diſcovered till two years after, remorſe and the upbraidings of conſcience purſued Somerſet every where. Thro all the ſplendor of fortune and favor, the trouble of his mind was viſible in his countenance, in his whole deportment †. He grew by degrees to neglect his perſon and dreſs. His ſprightlineſs of temper left him: and his converſation, from being gay and entertaining, was become cold, ſerious, and gloomy. This alteration in him was quickly followed by a change in the King's affections; which had no deeper or more ſolid foundation than theſe external and ſlight accompliſhments. The Courtiers, whom envy and intereſt render extremely ſharp-ſighted, quickly diſcovered this change, and improved it. Luckily for their deſigns, there now appeared at court another young man, fitted by nature to draw the curioſity of James, and to ſupplant the Earl of Somerſet in his favour. This was the famous George Villiers *, the younger ſon of a good family in Lei-

† Coke. * Wilſon, p. 79.

ceſ-

ceſterſhire; afterwards Duke of Buckingham. As the ſurprizing elevation of this youth had a particular influence on the future fortunes, and even on the fall, of Sir Francis Bacon, his character will deſerve a place at large in this hiſtory.

His mother, who could not give him a fortune, beſtowed on him ſuch an education as might enable him to acquire one, eſpecially in a court like this. The advantages he owed to nature, ſuch as a handſome face, a body exactly proportioned, an eaſe and gracefulneſs in his motions, ſhe had taken care to improve with that elegance of manners, that artificial politeneſs, and ſkill of excelling in trifles, which are the laſt finiſhings of a French education. In a word, he was juſt returned from his travels, and accompliſhed in all thoſe agreeable and frivolous arts, which were a certain recommendation to the favor of James. The Earls of Pembroke and Bedford, with ſome other Lords who were ſecret enemies to Somerſet, after dreſſing out this youth with a ſtudied exactneſs, placed him to advantage in the King's eye, at a comedy. That monarch was immediately ſmitten with his face, air, and appearance; which yet he endeavoured for ſome time to conceal. Nay he carried this diſſimulation

tion ſo far, that he would needs be ſolicited by the Queen to receive Villiers into his boſom: imagining the world would be thus deceived into a belief that he rather followed her advice, in this matter, than his own inclination. Such was the King-craft on which he ſo highly valued himſelf. The Queen was not eaſily prevailed with to take this ſtep; of which ſhe foreſaw all the conſequences *. At laſt, however, ſhe yielded to the Archbiſhop's importunity; telling him at the ſame time, that thoſe who labored moſt to promote Villiers might be the firſt to feel his ingratitude. Upon this he was immediately knighted, and declared Gentleman of the Bed-chamber: the herd of courtiers rivalling each other in their offers of friendſhip and ſervice to him. Some of them even deſcended to undertake his quarrels †, and brave ſuch as were ſtill in Somerſet's intereſt.

Among thoſe who courted the riſing favorite, none was more zealous than Sir Francis Bacon; as none was able to ſerve him more nobly, or more uſefully. Villiers had at this time ſenſe enough to feel his inex-

* Ruſhworth of Abbot, ch. 1.

† Weldon, p. 84.

perience in buſineſs, and therefore had recourſe to our Author for his advice: which he gave him fully in a letter, ſtill extant among his works *; written with ſo ſuperior a judgment and ſo much honeſt freedom, that it does honor equally to his head and heart. He has ranged his thoughts under ſeven or eight principal topics of conſideration, and entered into an accurate detail of what a miniſter ought to know and practiſe. In another letter to him, he has theſe remarkable words: "It is now time that you ſhould refer "your actions chiefly to the good of your Sovereign, "and your Country. It is the life of a beaſt always "to eat, and never to exerciſe. In this dedication "of yourſelf to the public, I recommend to you "principally that which I think was never done ſince "I was born; and which, not done, hath bred al-"moſt a wilderneſs and ſolitude in the King's ſervice: "which is, that you countenance, and encourage "and advance able and virtuous men in all kinds, "degrees, and profeſſions." This excellent advice the favorite received with thankfulneſs; and neglected.

* Bacon, Vol. III. p. 564.

THO

THO the king's paſſion was now wholly diverted upon a new object, he ſtill affected to treat Somerſet with kindneſs and diſtinction: even after the diſcovery of his being an accomplice in poiſoning Sir Thomas Overbury had rendered this diſſimulation not only mean but criminal*. Yet he continued [illegible] embracing [illegible] the man whom he had ſecretly ordered to be arreſted; and entreating him to haſten his return, when he believed he ſhould never ſee him more. In ſuch trifles he was fond to exert his talent of political management. The Earl's unhappy paſſion for the young counteſs of Eſſex was the ſource of all his misfortunes, and drew after it the moſt terrible conſequences: ending, as I have already obſerved, in the murder of his friend; in the ruin of himſelf, and of her to whom he had treacherouſly ſacrificed that friend. The whole affair is diſplayed at full length in our Author's charges againſt theſe two prime agents in that infernal conſpiracy. They were both found guilty ‡, ſentenced to die, and afterwards pardoned by the king, notwithſtanding his ſolemn imprecations to the contrary, on himſelf and his poſterity ||.

* Wilſon, p. 81. ‡ May 24, 25.

|| State Tryals, Vol. I. p. 334, 348.

CERTAIN hiſtorians have remarked, that there was ſomething, in the behaviour of Somerſet before his tryal, ſingular and myſterious: and that his maſter likewiſe ſeemed to labor under a ſecret anxiety of mind, equally ſurpriſing. The Earl, they pretend, ſaid aloud in the [illegible] that the King durſt not bring him to a tryal. Others reject this account as a downright calumny, invented merely to fix a black and cruel imputation on that prince's memory; or affirm at leaſt that it was founded only in popular rumor and malicious conjecture. But that there was more in it than conjecture, may be proved by undoubted authority; by ſome original letters of Sir Francis Bacon, then Attorney-General, and particularly employed in this very affair. Thoſe letters have, I think, eſcaped the obſervation of all our writers: I ſhall therefore quote from them ſuch paſſages as may ſerve to throw ſome light on this dark tranſaction; tho not enough perhaps to diſcover the darker motives that influenced the King's and the Earl's behaviour in it.

JAMES himſelf ſelected certain perſons to examine Somerſet with all ſecrecy, and marked out to them the particular articles on which they were to interrogate

gate him †. They had withall orders to work upon his obſtinate temper by every method of perſuaſion and terror: to give him now hopes of the King's compaſſion and mercy; and now to aſſure him that the evidence was full to convict him, ſo as there needed neither confeſſion nor ſupply of examination. Bacon, who was one of them, adds ‡ that they found his deportment ſober and modeſt, differing apparently from other times. In another letter he has theſe remarkable words: "That ſame little charm which "may be ſecretly infuſed into Somerſet's ear ſome "hours before his tryal was excellently well thought "of by his Majeſty: only I could wiſh it a little en-"larged; for if it be no more but to ſpare his blood, "he hath a kind of proud humor that may over-"work the medicine." All this was to be done with much caution and privacy; for the very Serjeants, appointed to manage part of the tryal, were not yet in the ſecret how the King would have it carried on: and therefore Bacon, to cover from them what he knew of the matter, deſired that ſome general heads of direction might be ſent to them all. From hence it appears that James ſhewed an extreme ſoli-

† Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 133. ‡ Vol. IV. Lett. 136.

citude about the Earl's behaviour, and the event of this affair. To what can it be attributed? His affection for Somerſet was extinguiſhed: and he lay under the ſtrongeſt obligations of public honor and juſtice not to ſcreen, from the cenſure of the law, a man whoſe guilt was of the moſt crying enormity. The Earl's ſtanding mute, or denying that guilt, eſpecially as the proofs of it were ſtrong and pregnant, could bring no poſſible imputation on his name. Why then all this dark practice? all theſe artifices of the perſons who examined him, only to make him ſubmit to be tried, and to keep him in temper during his tryal? There is ſtill more ‡. James ordered his Attorney-General to forecaſt and put in writing every poſſible caſe with regard to the tryal, and accompany them with his own opinion on each; that no ſurprize might happen, but that things duly foreſeen might have their directions and remedies in readineſs. Accordingly Sir Francis Bacon ſent a writing of that purport, on which there are ſeveral obſervations in the King's own hand. I will only quote one paſſage from it: "All theſe points of mercy and fa-
"vor to Somerſet are to be underſtood with this
"limitation; if he do not, by his contemptuous and

‡ Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 135.

"inſolent

" inſolent carriage at the bar, make himſelf incapa-
" ble and unworthy of them." The King's remark in the margin is in theſe words: " That danger is
" well to be foreſeen, leſt he upon the one part com-
" mit unpardonable errors; and I on the other part
" ſeem to puniſh him in the ſpirit of revenge." Somerſet was not to be tried for any offence againſt the King; but for the barbarous murder of a private man and his friend. What then means the contemptuous carriage that is ſo much apprehended? What are the unpardonable errors it may lead him to commit? If he reflected on a maſter, to whom he had been ſo much obliged, only for giving him up to a fair and equal tryal, to a tryal by many circumſtances rendered inevitable; that would, in the opinion of all mankind, only aggravate his crime, and furniſh a new motive to that maſter for letting the ſentence of juſtice paſs upon him in all its rigor. After theſe particulars, I may venture to mention a fact related by Sir Anthony Weldon; who ſays, that when the lieutenant of the tower, Sir George More, came and told the Earl, he muſt prepare for his tryal on the morrow, he abſolutely refuſed to appear, unleſs they dragged him to it by violence; adding, that the King

durſt not bring him to tryal ‡. Aſtoniſhed at ſuch raſh and dangerous expreſſions, the lieutenant, tho it was then midnight, went and demanded an audience of the King, to inform him of what had paſſed. James, upon hearing his ſtory, burſt into a paſſion of tears, and intreated More to uſe his utmoſt ſkill upon his priſoner, and ſoothe him, by whatever means, into proper temper and ſubmiſſion. This More undertook to do, and by a ſtratagem effected it. Welden affirms he had this ſtory from the lieutenant's own mouth: and tho he is a partial writer, and indulges himſelf in a humor of licentious ſcandal, the authentic vouchers I have produced render his anecdote not improbable. Other circumſtances, mentioned by thoſe who have profeſſedly written of this reign, I therefore omit: and ſhall only add, that there is in the Cabala † a letter to King James, from Somerſet after his condemnation, of a very peculiar turn. He deſires that his eſtate may be continued to him intire, in a ſtile rather of expoſtulation and demand than of humility and ſupplication: and thro the affected obſcurity of ſome expreſſions, one may

‡ Court of K. James I. p. 106.

† Cabala, p. 204. Edit. 1691.

diſcover,

diſcover, that there was an important ſecret in his keeping, of which the King dreaded a diſcovery. The iſſue was, that James continued to him a penſion of four thouſand pounds a year, as long as he lived.

PRINCE Henry died in the year 1612, univerſally lamented. His excellent qualities had endeared him to the love and expectations of all England. Germanicus was not more the darling of the Roman people; and the untimely death of both thoſe princes was univerſally believed to have been procured by poiſon. He had expreſſed, on all occaſions, an abhorrence of minions, and an utter contempt of Somerſet: he had even declared a firm reſolution, to humble both him and the family into which he was allied, if ever he came to reign. Whether the unaccountable tranſaction I have been relating has any reference to the death of this amiable Prince, or whether it does not point rather to an affair of a very different nature, the reader is left to determine.

VILLIERS, now without a rival in the King's affections, was every day receiving new proofs of his bounty: at the ſame time that he more than ſhared

with him the exerciſe of his authority. In the courſe of a few years he was made Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Maſter of the Horſe, Knight of the Garter, Earl, Marquis, and Duke of Buckingham, Chief Juſtice in Eyre of all the Foreſts, and Lord High Admiral of England. One of thoſe prodigies of fortune, who riſe now and then upon the world, as the vulgar imagine of comets, at once to aſtoniſh and ſcourge it: a ſignal inſtance of the wantonneſs of ſovereign power, and how far it may inſult human kind in exalting and adorning what it ſhould neglect or contemn. He drew up after him an obſcure kindred, numerous and indigent, beſtowed on them places of truſt and profit, married them into the nobleſt families, and graced them all with dignities, which were to be ſupported at the common expence of a whole people; to whom if any one of them was merely harmleſs, it was his utmoſt praiſe. After having red, not only what the enemies of this favorite have ſaid againſt him, but all that his partizans have alledged on his behalf, I do not find, during the whole time of his influence under two reigns, an influence ſupreme and unbounded, that he ever projected one ſcheme for the benefit of his country, or ever executed one undertaking to it's honor: the only great criterion

criterion by which we ought to judge thoſe men that adminiſter the public. The breaking off the Spaniſh match at laſt was ſolely a ſacrifice to his own vanity and reſentment. On the caprice of this youth, however, the firſt and ableſt men in the kingdom were to depend entirely, for their acceſs at court, for their advancement, for any opportunity of being able to ſerve their country and their Sovereign. Sir Francis Bacon was ſenſible of this, and courted his friendſhip with a particular application. But he muſt have felt all the ſervitude and diſagreeableneſs of his ſituation ‡, when, to be well with the King, he found it neceſſary to turn ſteward to the eſtate newly beſtowed on this young man; to ſtudy the ways and means of improving his lands, and of rendering his places moſt profitable to him. It is true he found his account in this ſervice; as it proved the ſureſt means of his own preferment: but, to a great and worthy mind, preferment ſo meanly obtained is diſgrace, only a little diſguiſed and gilded over.

The Lord Chancellor Egerton †, broken with age and infirmities, had often petitioned the King to be

‡ Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 163. † Cabala, p. 219.

diſmiſſed from his laborious employment. He was now ſeventy-ſeven years old, and had preſided in the court of Chancery from the year 1596, with an unblemiſhed reputation as a judge in private caſes: but his public conduct had been always framed to the directions of the court with an obſequiouſneſs, of dangerous example in one, who held ſo great and important a truſt. To this high dignity Sir Francis Bacon privately aſpired: and as it was the utmoſt ſcope of his ambition, he had aimed all his endeavours in the King's ſervice to merit it at his hands. He took care, at the ſame time, to ſtrengthen his pretenſions by the credit of Buckingham. His ambition even made him deſcend to artifices, that are as common in courts, as they are mean and unwarrantable. He endeavoured to ruin in the King's good opinion ſuch men as the voice of the public might probably deſign to the ſame office, and whom he therefore conſidered as his rivals. He was particularly jealous of Sir Edward Coke *, and repreſented him as one who abounded in his own ſenſe; one who affected popularity, and likely to court the good will of the nation at the hazard of the prerogative. For himſelf, he

* Vol. IV. Lett. 124.

placed

placed his great merit in obedience and ſubmiſſion; in the intereſt he had among the Commons, and in being able to influence the lower Houſe of Parliament: a ſervice which he magnifies as more important in a Chancellor, than to judge in equity between party and party *. This opinion of his own popularity in the nation was not groundleſs. The Parliament that met in 1614, tho extremely out of humor with the miniſters in general, diſtinguiſhed him by an uncommon mark of favor and confidence. An objection having been ſtarted in the houſe of Commons, that a ſeat there was incompatible with the office of Attorney-General, which required his frequent attendance in the upper houſe: the Commons, from their particular regard for Sir Francis Bacon, and for that time only, over-ruled the objection; and he was accordingly allowed to take his place among them. If I obſerve further, that the King raiſed him to the dignity of a Privy Counſellor while he was ſtill in this very office, it will be inſtead of many inſtances to ſhew, with what an addreſsful prudence he ſteered his courſe betwixt the court and the nation. He was thus favoured by a Prince, who exacted from all his ſervants an implicit ſubmiſſion to his maxims of go-

* Petyt's Placeta Parliam. p. 174.

vernment:

vernment: he gave no umbrage to a parliament whom theſe maxims had rendered jealous of the Prince, and of almoſt every man in his favor. But to return.

THESE inſinuations had their deſired effect. Upon the Chancellor's voluntary reſignation of the ſeals, they were given to Sir Francis Bacon, with the title of Lord Keeper, on the ſeventh of March 1617 *. To what intereſt he more particularly owed this promotion, we may learn from his letter of acknowledgment, written that very day, to the Earl of Buckingham.

A FEW days after he had the ſeals delivered to him, the king went a progreſs into Scotland, carrying with him the favorite, who was likewiſe his prime miniſter: for to him all buſineſs, public or private, was addreſſed; and according to his fancy, for the moſt part determined. The great affair that employed the deliberations of his council about this time, and had a fatal influence on his conduct ever after, was the marriage of Prince Charles with the Infanta of Spain. In this reſolution, tho contrary to all the

* Vol. IV. Letter 166.

rules

rules of good policy, he perſiſted for ſeven years together; againſt his own intereſt, againſt the univerſal voice of his people: only to procure the imaginary honor of an alliance with a crowned head: for all other alliances he thought below his dignity. Sir Francis Bacon *, who ſaw thro the vanity and danger of this intention, but who wanted reſolution to be greatly honeſt, contented himſelf with inſinuating ſoftly, that it would be neceſſary to have the council unanimous in their ſuffrage on the occaſion, whatever might be their private ſentiments. This hint was not ſufficient to open the King's eyes. On the contrary, he run blindfold into the ſnare that Gundamor was ſpreading for him. That famous Stateſman, as much by his buffooneries as by his talent for intrigue, had gained an abſolute aſcendant over James, leading him on from error to error: till in the end he made him ſacrifice his conſcience to the Pope, and his honor to the reſentments of Philip, in the murder of his braveſt ſubject Sir Walter Raleigh; the laſt terror of Spain, and the only ſurviving favorite of Queen Elizabeth. The Dutch too made advantage of the King's weakneſs and neceſſities. As the cautionary

* Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 172.

towns were ſtill in the hands of the Engliſh, the States were under ſome apprehenſions that the Spaniſh Miniſtry might prevail upon James *, who could not poſſibly conceal his fondneſs for the match in treaty, to put thoſe important places into their power. They knew at the ſame time that his treaſury was exhauſted, and that his courtiers were inſatiable. To bring their purpoſe about, they ceaſed all at once to pay the Engliſh who garriſoned thoſe places, as by their treaties they were obliged to do. Complaint being made of this to the Dutch Envoy at London, he inſinuated, as from himſelf, to ſome of the Miniſters, that if king James would deſire it of the States; they, out of conſideration for him, would take up money at exorbitant intereſt, and in one payment diſcharge the whole debt due to the crown of England. This ſtratagem took effect. James wrote to the States: and the matter was immediately put into negotiation. The penſionary Barnevelt, whom they ſent over, conducted the affair with ſo much addreſs, that the King agreed to deliver up the cautionary towns for leſs than three millions of florins; in lieu of eight millions they had engaged to pay Elizabeth, beſides the intereſt that had been running on for eighteen years. Such are the

* Rapin.

events

events of this reign; fit only to depreſs the writer, and diſtaſte the reader.

During the King's abſence in Scotland there happened an affair, otherwiſe of ſmall importance, but as it lets us into the true genius of thoſe times, and ſerves to ſhew in what miſerable ſubjection the favorite held all thoſe who were in public employments. He was upon the point of ruining Sir Francis Bacon, the perſon he had juſt contributed to raiſe; not for any error or negligence in their Maſter's ſervice, but merely for an opinion given in a thing that only regarded his own family. Indeed ſuch was the levity, ſuch the inſolence of his power, that the capricious removal of men from their places became the prime diſtinction of his thirteen years favor: which, as biſhop Hacket * obſerves, was like a ſweeping flood, that at every ſpring-tide takes from one land, to caſt what it has taken upon another. The affair was this. The year before, my Lord Coke had been removed from his place of Chief-Juſtice and diſgraced: the court having found him, in ſeveral inſtances, no friend to arbitrary will and pleaſure, or to the prerogative, as

* Life of Archbiſhop Williams, part 2. p. 19.

it

it was called; but reſolutely bent to maintain the integrity and honor of his poſt. One Peacham had been accuſed of inſerting in a ſermon ſeveral paſſages accounted treaſonable, for it ſeems they reflected on the miniſtry; but in a ſermon never preached, nor ever intended to be made public. The King, who was beyond meaſure jealous on this head, fearing the man might either be acquitted on his tryal, or not condemned to a capital puniſhment, had ordered his Attorney-General Bacon * to ſound the Judges beforehand, and gather their opinions, ſecretly and apart. My Lord Coke obſtinately refuſed to declare his; looking on this auricular taking of opinions, for ſo he named it, as not according to the cuſtoms of the realm, but new and of pernitious tendency. About the ſame time he had determined a cauſe at common law. The plaintiff †, who thought himſelf injured, would not abide by his deciſion, but applied to Chancery for relief: where the defendant refuſed to appear, diſclaiming the authority of that court; in which he was ſupported by the Chief-Juſtice, who threatned the Chancellor with a premunire, grounded on a ſtatute made 27th Ed. III. for thus invading the limits

* Vol. IV. Letter 112.
† Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 125, 142.

of

of his juriſdiction. The King, who thought his prerogative ſtruck at anew in this attack on the court of his abſolute power, as Bacon ſtiles it, had the matter examined before the Council: who condemned the Chief-Juſtice for what he had done, and obliged him to make a ſubmiſſion on his knees. But what compleated the diſtaſte taken at him, was his behaviour in a cauſe of the Biſhop of Litchfield and Coventry, to whom the King had granted a vacant church in Commendam. Serjeant Chiborne *, who was council againſt the Biſhop, in arguing the caſe had maintained ſeveral poſitions, reckoned prejudicial and derogatory to the King's ſupreme and imperial power, which was affirmed to be diſtinct from, and of a higher nature than his ordinary authority. Informed of this, James, by his Attorney-General Bacon, ordered the Judges to ſtay further proceeding in that buſineſs, till they had conſulted with him. The Judges aſſembled, and unanimouſly agreed, that they could not obey this order; that the letter they had received was contrary to law; that, by their oath and the duty of their places, they were not to delay Juſtice; that they had therefore proceeded in the cauſe at the time

* Letter 142, 145.

fixed:

fixed: and of this they certified the King in a writing under all their hands. Upon this remonſtrance, he writ them an angry letter, and peremptorily commanded them to ſtay all proceedings, till his return to London. They were then ſummoned before the Council, and ſharply reprimanded for ſuffering the popular lawyers to queſtion his prerogative; which was repreſented as ſacred and tranſcendent, not to be handled or mentioned in vulgar argument. At laſt raiſing his voice, to frighten them into ſubmiſſion, he put this queſtion to them ſeverally: "if, at any time, "in a caſe depending before the Judges, he conceived "it to concern him either in profit or power, and "thereupon required to conſult with them, and that "they ſhould ſtay proceedings in the mean time; "whether they ought not to ſtay them accordingly?" They all, the Chief Juſtice only accepted, acknowledged it their duty to do ſo*. His anſwer deſerves to be for ever remembred: "That when ſuch a caſe "happened, he would do that which ſhould be fit for "a Judge to do."

YET this great Lawyer, who had the honeſt courage to reſiſt the King to his face, wanted that inde-

* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 145.

pendence

pendence of mind which alone enables a man to bear ſolitude, and an acquaintance with himſelf. His diſgrace, which reflected more honor on him than all his preferments, he knew not how to ſupport: and therefore ſoon after ſued to be reinſtated in the King's favor. To recover it, he meanly enough courted the favorite with an offer, which he would not hear of when it was formerly made to him. While in power, he refuſed to give his daughter in marriage to Sir John Villiers *, not without marks of diſreſpect. He now ſubmiſſively entreated the ſame perſon to honor him with his alliance: and employed Secretary Winwood to inform the Earl of Buckingham of his extreme concern for what had paſſed with regard to the Earl's brother; that he now paſſionately wiſhed the treaty might be renewed and accompliſhed: adding, that they ſhould make their own terms of ſettlement, if his propoſal was accepted. As the young lady was not only a celebrated beauty, but a great fortune, the perſon moſt intereſted made no difficulty to cloſe with this propoſal: and his mother recommended it to her ſecond ſon with warmth. This alarmed the Lord-Keeper Bacon. Ever jealous of Coke's reputation, he dreaded his alliance

* Letter 177, 178.

with

with ſo powerful a family. His imagination ſuggeſted to him all the danger that threatned his preſent and future fortunes from this union: and he could not forget that he had lately treated his antagoniſt with a freedom that rather inſulted than admoniſhed him *. Theſe apprehenſions made him caſt about how to defeat the intended match, by raiſing ſuch objections to it as might touch the King and his favorite in point of public honor and advantage. His letters to both, on that occaſion, are written with the perplexity of a man who fears ſomething he is unwilling to own: yet his prudence paſſes over with a ſeeming unconcern, to enlarge only upon conſiderations that regard thoſe whom he would be thought to ſerve. But this management proved ineffectual. It was reſented by the Earl of Buckingham, and checked by a rough anſwer from the King. The Lady Compton too, informed of the part he was acting, gave a looſe to her tongue, and railed at him with a bitterneſs natural to women when they are thwarted in any favorite purſuit of intereſt or paſſion. Having thus, to prevent a diſtant and uncertain danger, involved himſelf in one that was real and im-

* Letter 139. to L. Coke.

mediate,

mediate, he made no ſcruple to change ſides at once: to go directly againſt his former opinions; and to offer unaſked his intereſt in the young Lady's Mother for promoting the match, he had been laboring to diſappoint *. On ſuch trivial accidents do the fortunes of miniſters depend: and to ſuch little and ſhameful arts is ambition often obliged to ſtoop. Nor even thus did he preſently regain his credit with Buckingham. The family continued to load him with reproaches: and he remained long under that agony of heart which an aſpiring man muſt feel, when his power and dignity are at the mercy of a King's minion, young, and giddy with his elevation, and who thinks himſelf offended. They were however reconciled at laſt; and their friendſhip, if obſequiouſneſs in one to all the humours of the other deſerves the name of friendſhip, continued without interruption for ſome years: while Buckingham went on daily to place and diſplace the great officers of the crown, as wantonneſs of fancy, or anger, or intereſt led him; to recommend or diſcountenance every private perſon who had a ſuit depending in any court, juſt as he was influenced; to authorize and protect every illegal project, that could ſerve moſt ſpeedily to enrich himſelf

* Letter 181.

ſelf or his kindred. In a word, he became formidable even to the maſter who had raiſed him from the duſt, and who ſhould have ſtill awed him by his authority: and this amidſt the diſſipation of a life, given up to idle amuſements, or ſullyed with criminal pleaſures.

In the beginning of 1619, Sir Francis Bacon was created Lord High Chancellor of England, and ſhortly after Baron of Verulam; which title he exchanged, the year following, for that of Viſcount St. Alban. Such events in his life as theſe may be paſſed over ſlightly: he was ſo great a man, that external honors could add no luſtre to his name. Indeed had they been the immediate reward of thoſe nobler ſervices he had done, and was ſtill meditating to do his country, they might deſerve more particular notice, for the ſake of him who beſtowed them.

Neither the weight and variety of buſineſs, nor the pomps of a Court, could divert his attention from the ſtudy of philoſophy. Thoſe were his avocations and encumbrances: this was his beloved employment, and almoſt the only pleaſure in which he indulged his freer and better hours. He gave to the public in 1620, his Novum Organon, as a ſecond part to his grand

grand inſtauration of the ſciences: a work that for twelve years together he had been methodizing, altering, poliſhing; till he had labored the whole into a ſeries of aphoriſms, as it now appears. Of all his writings this ſeems to have undergone the ſtricteſt reviſion, and to be finiſhed with the ſevereſt judgment. Indeed the form into which it is caſt admits of nothing foreign, of nothing merely ornamental. The lights and embelliſhments of imagination, the grace and harmony of ſtile, are rejected here, as beauties either ſuperfluous, or of an inferior nature. The Author has beſides made uſe of ſeveral terms in a new and peculiar ſenſe, which may have diſcouraged ſome readers; as it has made others imagine them equally unintelligible with the horrors of a vacuum, the quiddities, and ſubſtantial forms, of the philoſophy which he attempted to diſcredit: and therefore, of all his writings it has been the leaſt red, or underſtood. It was intended as a more uſeful, a more extenſive logic than the world had yet been acquainted with. An art not converſant about ſyllogiſms, and modes of argumentation, that may be ſerviceable ſometimes in arranging truths already known, or in detecting fallacies that lie concealed among our own reaſonings,

and thoſe of other men: but an art inventive of arts; productive of new diſcoveries, real, important, and of general uſe to human life. This he propoſed, by turning our attention from notions to things; from thoſe ſubtle and frivolous ſpeculations that dazzle, not enlighten, the underſtanding, to a ſober and ſenſible inveſtigation of the laws and powers of nature, in a way becoming ſages who make truth and information the ſole aim of their enquiries. In order to this, his firſt endeavour was to weed out of the mind ſuch errors as naturally grow in it, or have been planted there by education, and cheriſhed by the influence of men whoſe writings had long claimed a right of preſcription to rule and miſlead mankind. To a mind thus prepared for inſtruction, he propoſes the ſecond and ſcientifical part of his ſcheme, the true method of interpreting nature, by fact and obſervation; by ſound and genuine Induction, widely differing from that puerile art which till then had ſolely prevailed in philoſophy. His requires a ſufficient, an accurate collection of inſtances, gathered with ſagacity and recorded with impartial plainneſs, on both ſides of the queſtion: from which, after viewing them in all poſſible lights, to be ſure that no contradictory

tradictory inſtances can be brought, ſome portion of uſeful truth, leading on to further diſcoveries, may be at laſt fairly deduced. In this way, experiments and reaſonings grow up together, to ſupport and illuſtrate each other mutually, in every part of ſcience.

As we are now approaching towards the moſt memorable event of our Author's public life, which ended in a melancholy reverſe of his fortune and honor, it will be neceſſary to trace, ſtep by ſtep, the cauſes that produced it: eſpecially as the affair has not been hitherto conſidered in the point of view that renders it moſt intereſting and inſtructive. It will, I believe, appear with evidence, that, whatever his crimes might be, he was ſacrificed to the ſafety of another, far more criminal than himſelf: and that this was the act of an ill-judging maſter, with whom it was a greater merit to be amuſing in any degree, than to be ſerviceable in the greateſt.

Among the weakneſſes of King James, his vanity was the moſt pernitious, to his own family, and to the nation in general. He placed an infinite value on certain chimerical advantages that met in his perſon; on that inherent right by which he pretended the

crown of England was devolved to him; on his long acquaintance with the prime myſteries of government, and on his uncommon accompliſhments in learning. His favorite maxim was, that he who knows not how to diſſemble, knows not how to reign: but he ſeems not to have heard of a ſecond maxim, without which the firſt cannot be ſucceſsful, even for a time; to conceal every appearance of cunning, and to deceive under the maſk of candor and good faith. He, on the contrary, ſhewed his whole game at once, to his own ſubjects and to foreigners alike: ſo that in his attempts upon the former, in his negotiations with the latter, this Solomon was the only dupe. A great ſhare of learning he certainly had, but of learning that a King ought not to be acquainted with; the very refuſe of the ſchools, which ſerved for little elſe but to furniſh him with an impertinent fluency, on every ſubject: and he indulged himſelf in the ſovereign pedantry of ſetting it to ſhow, on every occaſion. Upon all theſe heads, he was extolled without meaſure by the moſt peſtilent of flatterers, grave and reverend eccleſiaſtics: for which, and becauſe they encouraged him in an unprincely application of his talent, he on many occaſions, made his power the mean

mean inſtrument to gratify their paſſions and luſt of dominion. They, in return, found out for him a title antecedent and ſuperior to human laws, even a divine right of being weak or wicked, without controul. And this doctrine, horrible as it is, they dared to derive from ſcripture: where if it could be found, which to affirm were blaſphemy, it would be the triumph of infidelity, and demonſtration that thoſe ſacred writings were inſpired, not by God, but by ſome Being, his oppoſite and the enemy of all goodneſs. This doctrine, meeting with his own perverted habits of thinking, made King James look upon his ſubjects as ſlaves; upon his parliament as uſurpers of a power to which they had no right, or at beſt a precarious one: and he had now, for ſeven years together, affected to govern without them; to ſet up an intereſt ſeparate from that of his people, and to ſupply his wants by all ways and means, but ſuch as the conſtitution preſcribed. Theſe methods were ſuggeſted to him by the worſt enemies of the commonwealth, the tribe of projectors and monopoliſts*: miſcreants who ſheltered themſelves under the name and influence of Buckingham, and who repaid his protection extravagantly,

* Hacket, p. 50.

at the expence of a people whom they were grinding and devouring. His mother too, now created a counteſs in her own right, a woman born for miſchief, of a meddling ſpirit and inſatiably greedy, was deep in the guilt of theſe tranſactions; forwarding every bad project that brought her in money; and by the mighty power ſhe had over her ſon, ſucceeding in every ſcandalous job ſhe undertook. Under an adminiſtration like this, when England was in effect governed by a diſſolute youth, himſelf in the hands of an intriguing, rapacious woman, it cannot be ſurprizing that the people were vexed and plundered by illegal patents, by monopolies, by other miſchievous projects, calculated to enrich a few, and to ruin thouſands. To all theſe patents, however procured, the Chancellor had readily, almoſt implicitly, affixed the ſeal, as the mere creature of Buckingham. Or if he ever ventured to inſinuate that any of them were contrary to law, his remonſtrance was too fearful and unſupported to produce any effect. This is the great ſtain on his character; that he deſerted, or neglected, the poſt of honor where providence had placed him, on the frontier, if I may ſo ſpeak, betwixt Prerogative and Liberty: that, if he did not encourage, he at leaſt connived

nived at, the invaſions that were every day making into the latter. Yet this was againſt his inclination, as well as againſt his better ſenſe of things: for as he knew well that his maſter's true intereſt lay in a good underſtanding with his people, he had often adviſed him to call frequent parliaments, and to throw himſelf on the affections of the nation for the ſupport of his government. Tho ſuch advice was repugnant to all the maxims by which that monarch wiſhed to eſtabliſh his power; tho he had reſolved to lay parliaments aſide for ever, as daring encroachers upon his prerogative, who made themſelves greater and their prince leſs than became either: yet he was now prevailed upon, to meet the two houſes once more. Indeed the exigency of his affairs rendered it neceſſary. His ſubjects, it is true, were haraſſed and pillaged; but he was ſtill in extreme want of money: thoſe wretches, to whom he delegated his authority, leaving to him little elſe beſides the public hatred, occaſioned by their rapines committed in his name. Add to this, that the juncture appeared favorable for obtaining large ſupplies from the commons. As the whole body of the nation expreſſed an uncommon zeal for recovering the Palatinate to his unfortunate

ſon-in-law, he had reaſon to expect, that on the aſſurance of his entering heartily into a war, they would vote him conſiderable aids of money; which he might afterwards divert, as he actually did, to other purpoſes that better ſuited his genius and notions.

A PARLIAMENT was accordingly ſummoned: and it met on the 20th of January, 1621. The King was not wholly miſtaken in his conjecture; for the commons immediately voted him two entire ſubſidies: but went at the ſame time upon a ſtrict enquiry into thoſe arbitrary impoſitions that, in a period of ſeven years, were become inſupportable to the people. Among the monopolies, in particular, there were three of flagrant injuſtice and oppreſſion. Certain perſons had obtained patents from the King, which empowered them to ſet an annual fine on ſuch as kept inns, or alehouſes, throughout England. Without a licence from the patentees, no man could hold either: and whoever would not readily pay the ſum, at which thoſe low inſtruments of power thought fit to exciſe him, was ſure of being haraſſed and plundered, or thrown into a jail. This proved a fruitful ſource of vexations, and fell heavy on the poorer ſort. The third was yet more enormous; a patent for the ſole making and vending

of

of gold and ſilver lace, which had been granted to two infamous tools of the favourite, Mompeſſon and Michel; the Dudley and Empſon of that age. The firſt a man of fortune, whoſe ſole ambition was to make himſelf conſidered, tho but by his crimes: the other an obſcure Juſtice of the peace, who, in a remote quarter of the town, picked up a ſordid maintenance from the ſtews. They had, it ſeems, ſhamefully abuſed the power their excluſive patent gave them, by putting off, for true, great quantities of counterfeit lace, wrought up and embaſed with copper, or other materials of a poiſonous nature †: and whoever preſumed to make or ſell any other was cruelly puniſhed, by fine and impriſonment ‡. In theſe outrages they were the more daring, becauſe Sir Edward Villiers, half-brother to the Favorite, was aſſociated into their patent, tho not named in it. Theſe, with many other grievances, were laid open in parliament, and ſeverely cenſured. But the Commons did not ſtop here. They were for carrying their ſearch up to the prime cauſe of all grievances, in order to diſcover by whoſe influence the ſeveral patents had been procured, and how they had paſſed the ſeals.

† Wilſon. ‡ Hacket, p. 49.

Complaints were brought into the houſe, about the ſame time, of corrupt practices even in the High Court of Equity. This alarmed the King for his Chancellor, and ſtill more for his Minion; as private intimations had been ſent to Buckingham, of a ſevere ſcrutiny that was making into all his management, and of frequent meetings that were held, with great ſecrecy, by certain members of the lower houſe §: in order to fix on him the guilt of whatever was moſt unjuſtifiable and oppreſſive. Buckingham's creatures, anxious and alarmed at this intelligence, perſuaded him, that he could ſecure impunity to himſelf and them, only by bringing his maſter forthwith to diſſolve the parliament: and James had certainly been frightened into that raſh and hazardous ſtep, but for the ſober remonſtrances of Williams Dean of Weſtminſter. That politic courtier adviſed him to cancel at once, by proclamation, all monopolies and vexatious grants; to ſacrifice inferior criminals to the public reſentment: and to ſoothe the parliament with an aſſurance that this reformation was firſt propoſed by his favorite, on finding how much he had been abuſed by deſigning and knaviſh projectors. This

§ Cabala, Letter 2.

counſel

counſel the King reſolved to follow: but it did not wholly free him from the perplexity he was under. The Chancellor, whom his intereſt led him to preſerve, was openly accuſed of corruption: the Favorite, whom his tenderneſs could not reſign, was ſecretly, and therefore more dangerouſly attacked; as the encourager, if not the author, of whatever was deemed moſt illegal and oppreſſive. To ſave both, at this juncture, would be impoſſible *: and he found he muſt either part with the Object of his inclinations, or with the Oracle of his counſels. How ſuch a prince would determine, is eaſy to gueſs. His paſſion prevailed over his reaſon: and my Lord St. Alban was made the ſcape-goat of Buckingham. He was even obliged to abandon his defence. As he had gained univerſal eſteem by his learning; and as his eloquence was equal to his parts, ſuperior and commanding, the King would not hazard his appearing before the Lords to plead his own cauſe. In the courſe of ſuch an enquiry, he might have diverted the public odium from himſelf, by laying open the long ſeries of bad adminiſtration to which he had been privy; the many illegal patents he had been

* Buſhel's Abridg. Poſt. p. 2, 3.

compelled to paſs: and all this came full home to Buckingham, the great object of national vengeance. The faults too, imputed to himſelf, he might have extenuated ſo far as to procure a great mitigation of the cenſure, that muſt otherwiſe fall upon him in it's utmoſt rigor. All this he foreſaw and felt; but the King abſolutely commanded him not to be preſent at his tryal: promiſing, on his royal word, to ſcreen him in the laſt determination; or if that could not be, to reward him afterwards with ample retribution of protection and favor. He obeyed, and was undone.

On the twelfth of March ‡, a committee for inſpecting into the abuſes of the courts of Juſtice was appointed by the Commons. Some days after, Sir Robert Philips, a gentleman eminent for public ſpirit and humanity, reported from thence to the houſe, that complaints had been brought before them, by two perſons, againſt the Lord Chancellor, for bribery and corruption. This report he made, not only without bitterneſs, but in terms of great regard and tenderneſs for the Accuſed; moving that the buſineſs might be preſented to the Peers, ſingly and without

‡ State Tryals, Vol. I. p. 253, &c.

exag-

exaggeration. At a conference, on the nineteenth, between certain members of both houſes, the Lords agreed to take the matter into their ſpeedy conſideration. As ſoon as this affair was become the public talk, a new croud of accuſers appeared, and charged home the unhappy Chancellor with other and flagrant inſtances of bribery; ſuch perſons eſpecially as had courted him with preſents, and afterwards received a judgement unfavourable to their expectations: animated more by that diſappointment, than by the iniquity of his deciſions ‡; for it does not appear that any of his decrees were ever reverſed. He was all this while confined to his houſe by an indiſpoſition, real or pretended: but, if his body was in health, what muſt have been the condition of his mind, in this interval of ſuſpenſe and anxiety? a great mind, already ſelf-convicted, yet exquiſitely ſenſible to good fame, which it has long enjoyed, and is upon the point of loſing for ever. His reflections, whether he looked back on the paſt, or forward to the proſpect before him, muſt have been terrible: as they were at the ſame time inflamed by peculiar circumſtances of ſhame and confuſion; that he

‡ Ruſhworth's Coll. V. 1.

was

was now, at the age of ſixty-one, falling a victim to the rapine and inſolence of his domeſtics, which he had weakly connived at, rather than to any faults of his own.

On the twenty-ſixth day of March, the King came to the houſe of Peers; and, in expreſſions of ſtudied popularity, owned the errors of his government, exclaimed againſt the patents complained of, frankly gave up to juſtice the leſſer criminals concerned in them: and all this for the ſake of his Favorite, whom in the end he endeavoured to ſcreen by the pooreſt reaſons imaginable. Indeed, no good reaſons could be alledged in defence of Him, who was the greateſt criminal; and without whoſe concurrence the wretches in queſtion could not have been guilty. The Lords were not impoſed upon by this ſpeech: however, thinking it ſufficient to have reduced their ſovereign to the neceſſity of an apology, they feigned to be of his opinion. Thus, Buckingham eſcaped for the preſent; to accumulate new guilt, and to fall at laſt, ignobly, by a private hand: after he had been devoted, by the curſes of a whole people, and more ſolemnly ſtill by the denunciations of their repreſentatives.

After a receſs of three weeks, the houſe met again: but the weight of their indignation fell ſingly, and therefore without mercy, on the Chancellor. They were not ſatisfied with his letter of general confeſſion, tho delivered to them by the Prince of Wales; in which he renounced all juſtification of himſelf, and ſued for no other favor, "but that his penitent "ſubmiſſion might be his ſentence, and the loſs of the "ſeals his puniſhment." He was obliged to put in a particular anſwer to every point of his accuſation: which he did on the firſt of May, 1621; acknowledging, in the moſt explicite words, the corruption charged upon him in twenty-eight ſeveral articles, and throwing his cauſe entirely on the compaſſion of his Judges. His ſentence was, "to undergo a fine of "forty thouſand pounds: to be impriſoned in the "Tower during the King's pleaſure; to be for ever "uncapable of any office, place, or employment in "the commonwealth; and never to ſit again in par-"liament, or come within the verge of the court." Thus he loſt the great privilege of his peerage: a ſeverity unuſual, except in caſes of treaſon and attainder.

The

THE laſt article of his charge furniſhes matter for much reflection. It alledges, "that he had given "way to great exactions in his ſervants, both in re-"ſpect of private ſeals, and otherwiſe for ſealing in-"junctions *." This indulgence to his domeſtics, which was certainly extreme, has been generally, and I believe truly, reckoned the principal cauſe of thoſe irregularities that drew on his diſgrace. Liberal in his own temper, or rather profuſe beyond the condition of a man who means to preſerve his integrity, he allowed his family in every kind of extravagance: and as many of his retinue were young, diſſipated, giddy in the purſuit of pleaſure, they ſquandered without meaſure, where they were indulged without controul †. Whether he did not diſcover this error till it was too late, or whether a ſoul like his, loſt in the greatneſs and immenſity of it's own views, could not attend to that detail of little and diſagreeable particulars which yet oeconomy requires; however that was, to ſupport his ordinary train of living, he fell into corruption himſelf, and connived at it in his de-

* Wilſon. Buſhel's Abridg. Poſt. p. 2

† One day, during his tryal, as he was paſſing thro a room where ſeveral of his domeſtics were ſitting; upon their getting up to ſalute him, Sit down my Maſters, he cried; your riſe hath been my fall.

pendents.

pendents. Thus we behold him, a memorable example of all that is great and exalted, of all that is little and low, in man. Such inconſiſtencies in our human nature cannot but alarm and terrify even thoſe who are moſt confirmed in a habit of virtue.

After a ſhort confinement in the Tower, the king reſtored him to his liberty, and forgave the fine in which the Parliament had amerced him. As this fine was very conſiderable, he managed ſo as to have it aſſigned over to ſome of his friends, under the notion of being his creditors ‡: And we find Williams, his ſucceſſor in the ſeals, complaining heavily of this ſtratagem; as if he thereby intended to defraud thoſe perſons to whom he was really in debt, who were many, and in danger of being ruined by his fall. But I am inclined to hope, that he made uſe of this artifice with a more innocent view; namely, to procure himſelf a ſhort reſpite from their importunity, till he could ſettle his private affairs, extremely perplexed by former ill management, and now by the loſs of his employments rendered deſperate. That I may not be obliged to mention any more an affair, alike ungrateful to the reader and writer, I will obſerve

‡ Cabala, p. 263. Edit. I. 1691.

here,

here, that about three years after this, he petitioned King James for a total remiſſion of his cenſure §: "to the end that this blot of ignominy might be re- "moved from him, and from his memory with poſ- "terity ||. What lay in a King's power, James rea- dily granted, a full and entire pardon of his whole ſentence †. Poſterity likewiſe, to which he appealed, has ſeemed unwilling to remember that he ever of- fended: and thoſe who record his failings, like thoſe who have made obſervations on the ſpots in the ſun, neither pretend to diminiſh his real brightneſs in him- ſelf, nor deny his univerſal influence on the world of learning *. Thus he withdrew from the glare of a public

§ Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 291. || Cabala, p. 249.

† Accordingly he was ſummoned to the firſt Parliament of King Charles.

* The reader ſees here how ſeverely the crime of receiving preſents, from ſuitors in the court of Chancery, was puniſhed in the perſon of this Chancellor. It was however a practice neither uncommon among his predeceſſors in that court; nor, I believe, imputed to them for unrighteouſneſs. This will appear plainly by the curious anecdote that follows; which I myſelf copied from the original manuſcript, in the poſſeſſion of Henry Wiſe Eſq; of Hampton-Court.

Declarant etiam executores predicti quod ipſi ad ſpeciale rogatum prædicti domini Henrici filii dicti Domini nuper Comi- tis, quod erat eis ad preceptum, DEDERUNT DOMINO CANCE- LARIO

public ſtation into the ſhade of retirement and ſtudious leiſure ‡; often lamenting, that ambition and falſe glory had ſo long diverted him from the nobleſt as well as the moſt uſeful employments of a reaſonable being: mortified, no doubt, into theſe ſentiments by a ſevere conviction, in his own perſon, of the inſtability and emptineſs of all human grandeur.

LARIO ANGLIÆ, * *J ſhaving bacyn argenti*, que erat predicti domini patris ſui, viz. AD EXCITANDUM DICTUM DOMINUM CANCELLARIUM *fore binevolum et benefacientem materiis* dicti Domini Henrici *in curiis* Domini regis *pendentibus*. pretium VIII *£*.

Declarant etiam executores predicti quod ipſi DEDERUNT DOMINO ARCHI. CANTUARIE CANCELARIO ANGLIE, * *J ſalt Saler auri* ad ſimilitudinem Cervi jacentis facti, quod erat dicti domini nuper comitis, appretiatum ad 40 *l.* 16 *s.* 8 *d.* *ad intentionem* ut IPSE DOM. ARCHI. ET CANC. ſuum bonum Dominium *et auxilium* dictis executoribus *favorabiliter oſtenderet et faceret* in *certis materiis* que verſus eoſdem executores ad grave prejudicium et impedimentum debite executionis teſtamenti et ultime voluntatis dicti Domini nuper Comitis ſubtiliter movebantur: ad valentiam ſicut predicitur.

This paper is called,

Declaracio Thome Huggeford, Nicoli Rody et Willi. Berhſwel preſbyter. Theſe were executors and feofees of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick: and this declaration was made in the 21 year of Henry 6th; to account for certain plate, jewels, and ſo forth, which had come into their hands as his executors.

‡ Buſhel's Abridg. Poſt. p. 3.

HITHER-

HITHERTO, we have followed him thro the buſtle and obliquity of buſineſs. We ſhall find him henceforth in a more pleaſing, tho a leſs conſpicuous, ſituation: freed from the ſervitude of a court; from an intolerable attendance there, on the vices and follies of men every way his inferiors, (for in this reign no one could riſe to power on more honorable terms:) in a condition now to purſue the native bent of his genius; to live to himſelf, and for the advantage, not of one age, or one people only, but of all mankind, and all times to come.

THE firſt conſiderable work he engaged in, after his retirement, was the hiſtory of Henry VII. which he undertook at the deſire of King James, and publiſhed in the year 1622. Whatever ſome writers may have inſinuated of his melancholy and dejection, we find every where, in this performance, evident traces of a ſpirit unbroken by age, and unſubdued by misfortunes. It has been highly applauded, and as much condemned: a proof that it has more than common merit. And we may venture to affirm that whatever it's faults are, they ariſe from no want of vigor in the underſtanding, or of warmth in the imagination,

gination, of the writer. King James affected to conſider his great grandfather Henry as a perfect model for the imitation of other Monarchs: and as his was the reign of flattery, this quickly grew to be the prevalent and faſhionable opinion at court. Tho in truth, that Prince's character was, in every part of it, unamiable; and his conduct, on many occaſions, weak or wicked. If my Lord Bacon has not wholly eſcaped the infection of his age; if he has here and there attempted to brighten the imperfections, and throw in ſhades the bad features of the original he was drawing; yet, thro theſe ſoftenings, we can eaſily ſee this King as he was, and in all his genuine deformity. Suſpicion and avarice, his own hiſtorian acknowledges, were the chief ingredients in his compoſition: and therefore his politics, both at home and abroad, were narrow, ſelfiſh, and falſe. Void of all great and extenſive prudence, he endeavoured to ſupply that want by temporary ſhifts, and the little expedients of cunning. By theſe he commonly had the luck to extricate himſelf out of difficulties, which a wiſer man would have timely foreſeen, and a better man have wholly prevented *. But as his genius was

* Bacon, Vol. III. p. 400.

unſociable

unſociable and ſolitary, the darkneſs in his temper paſſed on mankind for depth and ſagacity in his underſtanding †. His avarice too was ſordid and ſhameleſs. Nothing ſeemed mean, nothing unjuſt in his eyes, that could fill his coffers: and merely to fill them, for of wealth he had no enjoyment, he deſcended to arts of rapine no leſs ſcandalous than they were oppreſſive.

I HAVE acknowledged that my Lord Bacon's hiſtory has been taxed of partiality, and I will not diſſemble that his ſtile has been objected to, as full of affectation, full of falſe eloquence. But that was the vice, not of the man, but of the times he lived in: and particularly of a court that, after the Sovereign's example, delighted in the tinſel of wit and writing, in the poor ingenuity of punning and quibbling.

HIS Eſſays have, of all his works, been moſt current, and are ſtill very juſtly eſteemed. Towards the cloſe of his life he greatly enlarged them both in number and weight; and publiſhed them anew, not only in engliſh, but in a more univerſal language, which,

† P. 404.

he

he imagined, may preſerve them as long as books ſhall laſt. As they are intended not to amuſe but inſtruct; as they are neither a ſatire on human nature, nor the ſchool of ſcepticiſm; Monſieur de Voltaire obſerves *, that they have been leſs popular than the Maxims of Rochefoucault, or the Eſſays of Montagne. A remark that does my Lord Bacon honor; who was too great a man to court a reputation from the multitude, by ſacrificing to that malignity, or indulging that curious extravagance, which too many readers, I am afraid, expect to find gratified, even in writings of a moral kind.

Of the other works which he compoſed in this laſt ſcene of his life, I forbear to make any mention here: they will be all enumerated in another place. Let me only obſerve, that nothing can give a more exalted idea of the fruitfulneſs and vigor of his genius than the number and nature of thoſe writings. Under the diſcouragement of a public cenſure, broken in his health, broken in his fortunes, he enjoyed his retirement not above five years: a little portion of time! yet he found means to croud into it, what might have been the whole buſineſs, and the glory

* Lettres ſur les Anglois, p. 88.

too, of a long and fortunate life. Some of his former pieces he methodized and enriched: ſeveral new ones he compoſed, no leſs conſiderable for the greatneſs and variety of the arguments he treated, than for his manner of treating them. Nor are they works of mere erudition and labor, that require little elſe but ſtrength of conſtitution and obſtinate application: they are original efforts of genius and reflection, on ſubjects either new, or handled in a manner that makes them ſo. His notions he drew from his own fund: and they were ſolid, comprehenſive, ſyſtematical; the diſpoſition of his whole plan throwing light and grace on all the particular parts. In conſidering every ſubject, he ſeems to have placed himſelf in a point of view ſo advantageous and elevated, that he could from thence diſcover a whole country round him, and mark out the ſeveral ſpots of it, diſtinctly and with eaſe. Theſe characters are equally due to the works in which he made ſome progreſs, and to thoſe he could only attempt.

His ſuppoſed poverty has been much inſiſted on *, not only by our own writers, but by foreigners. Some of the former have aſſerted, that he languiſhed

* Wilſon.

out

out a ſolitary being in obſcurity and indigence: and among the latter, Le Clerc, who was led into the ſame notion by a paſſage in one of Howel's letters, has animadverted with an honeſt indignation on the meanneſs of that Prince, who could leave ſuch a man as he was, to ſtruggle, in his declining age, both with penury and affliction. I believe the matter has been exaggerated. Perhaps he did not enjoy affluence or entire eaſe of fortune: but his ordinary income muſt have placed him above ſordid want and anxiety. Dr. Rawley, who lived long in his family, affirms that the king had given him, out of the Broad Seal and Alienation Office, to the value of eighteen hundred pounds a year; which, with his own lands amounting to a third part more, he retained to his death. But then, he had treaſured up nothing in his proſperous condition againſt the day of adverſity: and his penſion was not only precarious, but ill-paid, by a King, who, inſtead of huſbanding his revenues for great or good purpoſes, was daily laviſhing them away, in fruitleſs negotiations, or on the leaſt deſerving of his ſubjects. Add to theſe things, that my lord Bacon lay all this time under the incumbrance of a vaſt debt: and that he had doubtleſs expended very conſi-

derable ſums in procuring or making experiments. Even thoſe, whom we ſee cloſe and ſparing on every other occaſion, are yet profuſe in gratifying a favorite paſſion. Such were the cauſes of that diſtreſs and of thoſe difficulties into which he was often plunged. That they were many and great, we can entertain no doubt *. It is but too ſtrongly confirmed to us by ſome unuſual expreſſions in his letters to King James; where we find him pouring out his heart in complaints and ſupplications of ſuch a ſtrain †, as every one who reveres his memory will wiſh he had never uttered. Thoſe who inſiſt on the meanneſs, thoſe who plead for the dignity, of human nature, may, in this one man, find abundant matter to ſupport their ſeveral opinions. But, let us draw a veil over imperfections, and at the ſame time acknowledge, that a very ordinary penetration may ſerve to diſcover remarkable blemiſhes and failings in the moſt comprehenſive minds, in the greateſt characters, that ever adorned mortality.

* It appears by a letter of Buckingham to him, that he aſked for the Provoſtſhip of Eaton College, and was refuſed it.

† Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 272.

KING

KING James died in 1625; after an inglorious and a fatal reign of three and twenty years: deſpiſed by foreigners, deſpiſed and hated by his own ſubjects. The miſchievous notions he broached, the perverſe conduct he held, gave riſe to thoſe diviſions that quickly after involved his kingdoms in all the guilt and miſery of a civil war: that ſhook the Britiſh conſtitution to it's foundations, and in the end overturned it.

HIS unfortunate Chancellor ſurvived him ſomething above a year. The multiplicity of buſineſs and ſtudy in which he had been long engaged, but above all the anguiſh of mind he ſecretly labored under, had undermined and broken into his health. After having been for ſome time infirm and declining, he owed his death at laſt to an exceſs, not unbecoming a philoſopher; in purſuing, with more application than his ſtrength could bear, certain experiments touching the conſervation of bodies. He was ſo ſuddenly ſtruck in his head and ſtomach, that he found himſelf obliged to retire into the Earl of Arundel's houſe at Highgate, near which he then happened to be. There he ſickened of a fever, attended with a de-

fluxion on his breaſt: and, after a week's illneſs, expired; on the ninth of April ‡, in the ſixty-ſixth year of his age. How he bore this indiſpoſition, or what diſcourſes he held at the nearer approaches of death, no account is to be found; an omiſſion which every reader muſt feel and regret: as nothing can awaken the attention, nothing affect the heart of man more ſtrongly than the behaviour of eminent perſonages in their laſt moments; in that only ſcene of life wherein we are all ſure, later or ſooner, to reſemble them. There remains only a letter *, the laſt he ever wrote, addreſſed to that nobleman under whoſe roof he died: in which he compares himſelf to a celebrated philoſopher of antiquity, Pliny the elder; who loſt his life by enquiring, with too dangerous a curioſity, into the firſt great eruption of Veſuvius.

THUS lived, and died, the Lord Chancellor Bacon †.

HE

‡ 1626. * Bacon, Vol. IV. Lett. 297.

† He continued ſingle till after forty, and then took to wife a daughter of Alderman Barnham of London, with whom he received a plentiful fortune, but had by her no children: and ſhe out-lived him upwards of twenty years. Such readers as have any curioſity to know what regimen he obſerved, may take the following

He was buried privately in St. Michael's church near St. Albans. The ſpot that contains his remains lay obſcure and undiſtinguiſhed, till the gratitude of a private man *, formerly his ſervant, erected a monument to his name and memory. In another country, in a better age, his monument would have ſtood a public proof in what veneration the whole ſociety held a citizen, whoſe genius did them honor, and whoſe writings will inſtruct their lateſt poſterity.

following account of it in the words of his Chaplain. "His "diet was rather plentiful and liberal than reſtrained. In his "younger years he was much given to the finer and lighter ſorts "of meats: but afterwards he preferred the ſtronger, ſuch as the "ſhambles afforded; as thoſe which bred the more firm and "ſubſtantial juices, and leſs diſſipable. He did not, you may be "ſure, neglect that himſelf, which he ſo much extolled to others "in his writings, the frequent uſe of nitre; whereof he took "the quantity of about three grains in thin warm broth every "morning, for thirty years together. His ordinary phyſic was "a maceration of rhubarb, infuſed into a draught of white-wine "and beer mingled together for the ſpace of half an hour, once "in ſix or ſeven days, immediately before his meal, whether "dinner or ſupper; that it might dry the body leſs. His receipt "for the gout, which conſtantly gave him eaſe within two "hours, is ſet down in the end of the Natural Hiſtory." Vol. III. p. 233.

* Sir Thomas Meautys.

ONE paſſage in his will is remarkable. After bequeathing his ſoul and body in the uſual form, he adds, "my name and memory I leave to foreign "nations; and to mine own countrymen, after ſome "time be paſſed over *." As to the former, he was, even in his life time, looked upon with admiration by the moſt eminent men that France and Italy could then boaſt of: and by ſome of them viſited, as One whoſe talents were an ornament, not only to his age, but to human nature itſelf. When the Marquiſs D'Effiat brought into England the Princeſs Henrietta-Maria, wife to Charles the Firſt, he paid a viſit to my Lord Bacon †; who, being then ſick in bed, received him with the curtains drawn. "You re-"ſemble the angels, ſaid that miniſter to him: we "hear thoſe beings continually talked of, we believe "them ſuperior to mankind, and we never have the "conſolation to ſee them." Among his countrymen, the names, alone, of thoſe who have adopted his notions, and proceeded on his plan, are his higheſt encomium. To paſs over a long line of philoſophers, all illuſtrious; he reckons in the liſt of his followers a Boyle, a Locke, a Newton himſelf.

* Baconiana, p. 203.

† Voltaire, Lettres ſur les Anglois, p. 82.

ONE

One ſingularity there was in his temperament, not eaſily to be accounted for *: in every eclipſe of the moon, whether he obſerved it or not, he was certainly ſeized with a ſudden fit of fainting; which left him, without any remaining weakneſs, as ſoon as the eclipſe ended. He was of a middling ſtature ‡; his forehead ſpacious and open, early impreſſed with the marks of age; his eye lively and penetrating; his whole appearance venerably pleaſing; ſo that the beholder was inſenſibly drawn to love, before he knew how much reaſon there was to admire him. In this reſpect, we may apply to Bacon what Tacitus finely obſerves of his father-in-law, Agricola: a good man you would readily have judged him to be, and have been pleaſed to find him a great man.

Those talents that commonly appear ſingle in others, and they too men of reputation, ſhone forth in him united and eminent. All his cotemporaries, even thoſe who hated the Courtier, ſtand up and bear witneſs together to the ſuperior abilities of the Writer and Pleader, of the Philoſopher and Companion ‖.

* Rawley's Life of Bacon. ‡ Evelyn of Medals, p. 340.
‖ Oſborn's Advice to a ſon.

In converſation, he could aſſume the moſt differing characters, and ſpeak the language proper to each, with a facility that was perfectly natural; or the dexterity of the habit concealed every appearance of art: a happy verſatility of genius, which all men wiſh to arrive at, and one or two, once in an age, are ſeen to poſſeſs. In public, he commanded the attention of his hearers, and had their affections wholly in his power. As he accompanied what he ſpoke with all the expreſſion and grace of action, his pleadings, that are now perhaps red without emotion, never failed to awaken in his audience the ſeveral paſſions he intended they ſhould feel. This is not a picture of him drawn from fancy: it is copied, and that too but in miniature, after another taken by One who knew him well *; a good judge of merit, and ſeldom known to err, at leaſt in heightening a favorable likeneſs. As a philoſopher, it is ſcarce hyperbolical to ſay of him, in Mr. Addiſon's words, that he had the ſound, diſtinct, comprehenſive knowledge of Ariſtotle, with all the beautiful lights, graces, and embelliſhments of Cicero. To this commendation of his talents, the Learned throughout Europe have

* B. Johnſon, in his diſcoveries.

given

given their common ſanction, and own him for the father of the only valuable philoſophy, that of fact and obſervation.

It remains then to conſider him, more particularly than we have hitherto done, in this moſt known and conſpicuous part of his character; where his merit is unqueſtionably great and entirely his own: for, to the writings of the antients he was not, he could not, be obliged. They had either miſtaken the right road to natural knowledge: or if any of them ſtruck into it by chance, finding the way difficult, obſcure, and tedious, they ſoon abandoned it for ever. He owed to himſelf alone, to a certain intellectual ſagacity, that beam of true diſcernment which ſhewed him at once, and as it were by intuition, what the moſt painful enquirers, for more than twenty ages backward, had ſearched after in vain. And here let me obſerve towards him the ſame impartiality I have hitherto aimed at: and, in order to know what he really did as a philoſopher, place before the reader a ſhort view of the ſtate of learning in Europe, from the dark period of Gothiciſm down to the ſixteenth century. But let me at the ſame time acknowledge, that this ac-

count will be only a rude and imperfect ſketch; conſiſting of a few detached particulars, without much order or method.

ALTHO the great aera of ignorance has been fixed, juſtly enough, to thoſe times when the northern nations, like a mighty inundation, overſpred the face of Europe; yet it is no leſs certain that barbariſm and corruption were entered into arts and ſciences ere the Savages had made any impreſſion on the Roman empire. Under them indeed, that darkneſs which had been long growing on the world, and gradually extinguiſhing every light of knowledge, ſoon became total, and threatened to be perpetual. In the eighth century, we find that the higheſt ambition of the Clergy was to vie with one another in chanting the public ſervice, which yet they hardly underſtood. This important emulation run ſo high between the Latin and French prieſthood, that Charlemagne, who was then at Rome, found it neceſſary to interpoſe, and decide the Controverſy in perſon *. The Monk, who relates this affair with a moſt circumſtantial exactneſs, adds that the Emperor entreated Pope Adrian to procure him certain perſons, who might

* 787. Joannis Launoii, op. t. 4. p. 2.

teach his ſubjects the firſt principles of grammar and arithmetic; arts that were then utterly unknown in his dominions. This warlike Monarch, tho his own education had been ſo far neglected that he had never learned to write, diſcovered, by his natural good ſenſe, the value of knowledge, and ſet himſelf to be it's promoter and patron. He even allowed a public ſchool to be opened in the imperial palace, under the direction of our famous countryman Alcuin; on whom he chiefly relied for introducing into France ſome tincture of that philoſophy which was ſtill remaining in Britain. But how ſlow and ineffectual the progreſs of any learning muſt have been, we may gueſs from an edict of the Council of Challons, in the next century †; which earneſtly exhorts all monaſteries to be careful in having their manuals of devotion correctly tranſcribed *: leſt, while they piouſly mean to aſk of God one thing, ſome inaccurate manuſcript may betray them into praying for the quite contrary.

As to Britain, if learning had ſtill ſome footing there in the eighth century, it was ſo totally exterminated from thence in the ninth; that, throughout the

† 813. * Launoii, p 3.

whole kingdom of the Weſt-Saxons, no man could be found who was ſcholar enough to inſtruct our King Alfred *, then a child, even in the firſt elements of reading: ſo that he was in his twelfth year before he could name the letters of the alphabet. When that renowned Prince aſcended the throne, he made it his ſtudy to draw his people out of the ſloth and ſtupidity in which they lay: and became, as much by his own example, as by the encouragement he gave to learned men, the great reſtorer of arts in his dominions. And here we are called upon to obſerve, that as France had been formerly obliged to England in the perſon of Alcuin, who planted the ſciences there under Charlemagne †: our Iſland now received the ſame friendly aſſiſtance from thence by Grimbald, whom King Alfred had invited hither, and made Chancellor of Oxford. Such events as theſe are too conſiderable, in the literary hiſtory of the ninth age, to be paſſed over unobſerved. The riſe of a noted grammarian, the voyage of an applauded doctor, are recorded, by the chroniclers of that century, with the ſame reverence that an antient writer would mention the appearance of a Lycurgus, or a Timoleon; of a law-

* Hiſt. & antiq. univer. Oxon, p. 13. † 879.

giver

giver who new-models a ſtate, or a hero who reſcues a whole people from ſlavery.

But theſe fair appearances were of ſhort duration. A night of thicker darkneſs quickly overſpred the intellectual world: and in the moral, followed a revolution ſtill more deplorable. To common ſenſe and piety, ſucceeded dreams and fables, viſionary legends and ridiculous penances. The Clergy, now utter ſtrangers to all good learning, inſtead of guiding a rude and vitious Laity by the precepts of the goſpel which they no longer red; amuſed them with forged miracles, or overawed them by the ghoſtly terrors of demons, ſpectres and chimeras. This was more eaſy, and more profitable too, than the painful example of a virtuous life. The profound depravity that was ſpred thro all conditions of men, eccleſiaſtic and ſecular, appears in nothing more plain than in the reaſons aſſigned for calling ſeveral councils about this time. In one, new canons were to be made, forbidding adultery, inceſt, and the practice of pagan ſuperſtitions: as if theſe things had not till then been accounted criminal *. In another, it was found neceſ-

* Giannone, Iſtor. di Napoli, l. 5.

ſary

ſary to declare, that a number of Angels worſhipped univerſally under certain names were altogether unknown: and that the church could not warrant the particular invocation of more than three. Another, which the Empreſs Irene had ſummoned for the reformation of diſcipline, ordained, that no Prelate ſhould thenceforth convert his epiſcopal palace into a common inn; nor, in conſideration only of any ſum of money given him by one man, curſe and excommunicate another. A fourth and fifth cenſure the indecency of avowed concubinage: and enjoin that Fryars and Nuns ſhould no longer converſe or live promiſcuouſly in the ſame convent.

THE See of Rome, which ſhould have been a pattern to the reſt, was of all chriſtian churches the moſt licentious*; and the pontifical chair often filled with men,

* The book entitled, The tax of the Roman Chancery, publiſhed firſt at Rome, in the year 1514, furniſhes us with a flagrant inſtance of this in the following paſſage, which I chuſe not to tranſlate. "Abſolutio à lapſu carnis ſuper quocunque actu libi-
"dinoſo commiſſo per Clericum, etiam cum monialibus, intra et
"extra ſepta monaſterii; aut cum conſanguineis vel affinibus,
"aut filiâ ſpirituali, aut quibuſdam aliis, ſive ab unoquoque de
"per ſe, ſive ſimul ab omnibus abſolutio petatur cum diſpenſa-
"tione ad ordines et beneficia, cum inhibitione tur. 36, duc. 3.
"Si

men, who, inſtead of adorning their ſacred character, made human nature itſelf deteſtable: a truth by many catholic writers acknowledged and lamented. Several Popes were by their ſucceſſors excommunicated, their acts abrogated, and the ſacraments adminiſtred by them pronounced invalid *. No leſs than ſix were expelled by others who uſurped their ſeat; two were aſſaſſinated: and the infamous Theodora, infamous even in that age, by her credit in the holy city obtained the triple crown for the moſt avowed of her gallants; who aſſumed the name of John the Tenth. Another † of the ſame name was called to govern the Chriſtian world at the age of twenty one; a baſtard ſon of Pope Sergius, who died eighteen years before. If ſuch were the men who arro-

" Si verò cum illis petatur abſolutio etiam a crimine commiſſo " contra naturam, vel cum brutis, cum diſpenſatione, ut ſupra, " et cum inhibitione tur. 90, duc. 12, car. 16. Si verò petatur " tantum abſolutio a crimine contra naturam, vel cum brutis, " cum diſpenſatione et inhibitione, turon. 36, duc. 9. Abſolu- " tio pro Moniali que ſe permiſit pluries cognoſci intra et extra " ſepta monaſterii, cum rehabilitate ad dignitates illius ordinis, " etiam abbatialem, turon. 36, duc. 9." In the Edition of Bois-le-duc, there is " Abſolutio pro eo, qui interfecit patrem, ma- " trem, ſororem, uxorem . . . . g. 5, vel 7." Vide Bayle, art. Banck.

* Idem, l. 7. † John XI.

gated

gated to themſelves titles and attributes peculiar to the Deity, can we wonder at the greateſt enormities among Lay-men? Their ſtupidity kept pace with the diſſolution of their manners, which was extreme: they ſtill preſerved, for the very clergy we have been ſpeaking of, a reverence they no longer had for their God. The moſt abandoned among them, miſcreants, familiar with crimes that humanity ſtartles at, would yet, at the hazard of their lives, defend the immunities of a church, a conſecrated utenſil, or a donation made to a convent. In ſuch times as thoſe, it were in vain to look for uſeful learning and philoſophy. Not only the light of ſcience, but of reaſon, ſeems to have been well-nigh extinguiſhed.

It was not till late *, after the ſack of Conſtantinople by the Turks, that the writings of Ariſtotle began to be univerſally known and ſtudied. They were then, by certain fugitive Greeks, who had eſcaped the fury of the Ottoman Arms, brought away and diſperſed thro the Weſtern parts of Europe. Some particular treatiſes of his, it is true, had been long made public: but chiefly in tranſlations from the Arabic, done by men who, far from rendering faithfully the Author's ſenſe, hardly underſtood his lan-

* An. 1453.

guage.

guage. Theſe however gave birth to the Scholaſtic Philoſophy; that motley offspring of error and ingenuity: and to ſpeak freely, the features of both parents were all along equally blended in the complexion of the daughter. To trace at length the riſe, progreſs, and variations of this philoſophy, would be an undertaking not only curious but inſtructive; as it would unfold to us all the mazes in which the force, the ſubtlety, the extravagance of human wit can loſe themſelves; till not only profane learning but divinity itſelf was at laſt, by the refined frenzy of thoſe who taught both, ſubtilized into mere notion and air.

THEIR philoſophy was neither that of Ariſtotle entirely, nor altogether differing from his. Whatever opinions the firſt founders of it had been able to draw, from Boëtius his Latin commentator, or from the wretched tranſlations above-mentioned, theſe they methodized and illuſtrated, each according to his ſeveral talent, and the genius of the age he lived in. But this, inſtead of producing one regular and conſiſtent body of ſcience, even from wrong principles, ended in a monſter, made up of parts every where miſhapen and diſſimilar. Add to this, that they left natural

natural knowledge wholly uncultivated; to hunt after occult qualities, abſtract notions, and queſtions of impertinent curioſity: by which they rendered the very Logic, their labours chiefly turned upon, intricate, uſeleſs, unintelligible.

ALSTEDIUS, in his chronology of the Schoolmen, has divided their hiſtory into three principal periods or ſucceſſions: the firſt beginning with Lanfranc *, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, who floriſhed about the middle of the eleventh century; and ending with Albert the Great two ages later †: the ſecond, that commences from him, determining in Durand; as the third and laſt ended in Luther, at the reformation. Morhoff ‡, however, ſtrenuouſly contends, that Rucelinus an Engliſhman, was properly the father of the Schoolmen: and that to him the ſect of the Nominaliſts owed it's riſe and credit. He adds, that it revived afterwards in the perſon of Occam, another of our countrymen, and the perpetual antagoniſt of Duns Scotus, who had declared for the Realiſts, and was reckoned their ableſt champion. The learned reader needs not be told, that the Scholaſtic Doctors were all

* An. 1050. † An. 1320.

‡ Polyhiſtor. Tom. II. p. 731 &c.

diſtin-

diſtinguiſhed into theſe two Sects; formidable party-names, which are now as little known or mentioned as the controverſies that once occaſioned them. It is ſufficient to ſay, that, like all other parties, they hated each other heartily; treated each other as heretics in logic: and that their diſputes were often ſharp and bloody; ending not only in the metaphorical deſtruction of common ſenſe and language, but in the real mutilation and death of the combatants. For, to the diſgrace of human reaſon, mankind in all their controverſies, whether about a notion or a thing, a predicament or a province, have made their laſt appeal to brute force and violence. The titles * with which theſe Leaders were honored by their followers, on account of the ſublime reveries they taught, are at once magnificent and abſurd: and prove rather the ſuperlative ignorance of thoſe times than any tranſcendent merit in the men to whom they were applied. From this cenſure we ought nevertheleſs to except One, who was a prodigy of knowledge for the age he lived in, and is acknowledged as ſuch by the age to which I am writing. I mean the renowned

* The profound, the ſubtile, the marvelous, the indefatigable, the irrefragable, the angelic, the ſeraphic, the fountain of life, light of the world, &c.

Fryar

Fryar Bacon, who ſhone forth ſingly thro the profound darkneſs of thoſe times; but rather dazzled than enlightened the weaker eyes of his cotemporaries. As if the name of Bacon were auſpicious to philoſophy, this Man, not only without aſſiſtance or encouragement, but inſulted and perſecuted, by the unconquerable force of his genius penetrated far into the myſteries of nature: and made ſo many new diſcoveries in Aſtronomy and Perſpective, in Mechanics and Chimiſtry, that the moſt ſober writers even now cannot mention them without ſome marks of emotion and wonder. It is Dr. Friend's obſervation, that he was almoſt the only Aſtronomer of his age: and the reformation of the Callendar, by him attempted and in a manner perfected, is a noble proof of his ſkill in that ſcience. The conſtruction of ſpectacles, of teleſcopes, of all ſorts of glaſſes that magnify or diminiſh objects, the compoſition of gunpowder (which Bartholdus Swartz is thought to have firſt hit upon almoſt a century later) are ſome of the many inventions with juſtice aſcribed to him. For all which, he was in his life-time calumniated and oppreſſed: and after his death wounded in his good name, as a magician who had dealt in arts, infernal and abominable.

nable. He tells us, that there were but four perſons then in Europe who had made any progreſs in the Mathematics; and in Chimiſtry yet fewer: that thoſe who undertook to tranſlate Ariſtotle, were every way unequal to the taſk; and that his writings, which, rightly underſtood, Bacon conſidered as the fountain of all knowledge, had been lately condemned and burned, in a ſynod held at Paris.

THE works of that celebrated Antient have, in truth, more exerciſed the hatred and admiration of mankind, than thoſe of all the other philoſophers together. Launoy* enumerates no leſs than thirty-ſeven Fathers of the Church who have ſtigmatized his name, and endeavoured to reprobate his doctrines. Morhoff† has reckoned up a ſtill greater number of his commentators, who were at the ſame time implicitely his diſciples: and yet both theſe authors are far from having given a complete liſt either of his friends or enemies. In his life-time he was ſuſpected of irreligion, and, by the Pagan prieſthood, marked out for deſtruction: the ſucceſſors of thoſe very men were his partizans and admirers. His works met

* Lib. de varia Ariſt. fortuna, Tom. IV.
† Polyhiſtor. Tom. II.

with

with much the ſame treatment from the Chriſtian clergy: ſometimes proſcribed for heretical; ſometimes triumphant, and acknowledged the great bulwark of Orthodoxy. Launoy has written a particular treatiſe on the ſubject, and mentioned eight different revolutions in the fortune and reputation of Ariſtotle's philoſophy. To paſs over the intermediate changes, I will juſt mention two, that make a full and ridiculous contraſt. In the above-mentioned Council held at Paris about the year 1209 *, the Biſhops there cenſured his writings, without diſcrimination, as the peſtilent ſources of error and hereſy; condemned them to the flames, and commanded all perſons, on pain of excommunication, not to read, tranſcribe, or keep any copies of them. They went farther, and delivered over to the ſecular arm no leſs than ten perſons; who were burned alive, for certain tenets, drawn, as thoſe learned prelates had heard, from the pernitious books in queſtion. Thoſe very books, in the ſixteenth century, were not only red with impunity, but every where taught with applauſe: and whoever diſputed their orthodoxy, I had almoſt ſaid their infallibility, was perſecuted as an infidel and

* Launoius, ubi ſupra.

miſcreant.

miſcreant. Of this the ſophiſter Ramus is a memorable inſtance. Certain animadverſions of his, on the peripatetic philoſophy, occaſioned a general commotion in the learned world. The univerſity of Paris took the alarm hotly, and cried out againſt this attempt as deſtructive of all good learning, and of fatal tendency to religion itſelf. The affair was brought before the parliament: and appeared of ſo much conſequence to Francis the Firſt *, that he would needs take it under his own immediate cognizance. The edict is ſtill extant, which declares Ramus inſolent, impudent, and a lyar. His books are thereby for ever condemned and aboliſhed †: and, what is a ſtrain of unexampled ſeverity, the miſerable Author is ſolemnly interdicted from tranſcribing, even from reading, his own compoſitions!

We might from hence be led to imagine, that when the authority of an antient philoſopher was held ſo ſacred, philoſophy itſelf muſt have been thoroughly underſtood, and cultivated with uncommon ſucceſs. But the attachment of thoſe Doctors was to a name, not to truth, or valuable ſcience: and our Author

* Launoii, tom. IV. p. 205. † 10th May, An. 1543.

very

very juſtly compares them to the Olympic Wreſtlers, who abſtained from neceſſary labors, that they might be fit for ſuch as were not ſo *. Under their management, it was a philoſophy of words and notions, that ſeemed to exclude the ſtudy of nature; that inſtead of enquiring into the properties of bodies, into the laws of motion by which all effects are produced, was converſant only in logical definitions, diſtinctions, and abſtractions, utterly barren and unproductive of any advantage to mankind. The great aim of thoſe ſolemn triflers was rather to perplex a diſpute than to clear up any point of uſeful diſquiſition; to triumph over an enemy, than to enlarge the knowledge, or better the morals of their followers. So that this captious philoſophy was a real obſtacle to all advances in ſound learning, human and divine. After it had been adopted into the chriſtian theology, far from being of uſe to explain and aſcertain myſteries, it ſerved only to darken and render doubtful the moſt neceſſary truths; by the chicanery of argumentation with which it ſupplied each ſect, in defence of their peculiar and favorite illuſions. To ſo extravagant a height did they carry their idolatry of Ariſtotle, that ſome of

* Bacon's Apothegms.

them

them diſcovered, or imagined they diſcovered in his writings, the doctrine of the Trinity; that others publiſhed formal diſſertations to prove the certainty of his ſalvation, tho a heathen: and that a patriarch of Venice is ſaid to have called up the Devil expreſsly, in order to learn from him the meaning of a hard word in Ariſtotle's phyſics *. But the crafty Demon, who perhaps did not underſtand it himſelf, anſwered in a voice ſo low and inarticulate, that the good prelate knew not a word he ſaid. This was the famous Hermolaus Barbaro. The Greek word, that occaſioned his taking ſo extraordinary a ſtep, is the Entelechia of the peripatetics, from whence the ſchoolmen raiſed their ſubſtantial forms: and which Leibnitz, towards the end of the laſt century, attempted to revive in his Theory of motion.

The Reformation itſelf, that diffuſed a new light over Europe, that ſet men upon enquiring into errors and prepoſſeſſions of every kind, ſerved only to confirm the dominion of this philoſophy: proteſtants as well as papiſts entrenching themſelves behind the authority of Ariſtotle, and defending their ſeveral tenets

* Bayle, art. Barbaro.

by the weapons with which he furniſhed them. This unnatural alliance, of theology with the peripatetic doctrines, rendered his opinions not only venerable but ſacred: they were reckoned as the land-marks of faith and reaſon both, which to pull up or remove, would be daring and impious. Innovations in philoſophy, it was imagined, would gradually ſap the very foundations of religion, and in the end lead to downright atheiſm. If that veil of awful obſcurity, which then covered the face of nature, ſhould be once drawn; the raſh curioſity of mankind would lead them to account for all appearances in the viſible world, by ſecond cauſes, by the powers of matter and mechaniſm: and thus they might come inſenſibly to forget or neglect the great original cauſe of all. This kind of reaſoning convinced the multitude, overawed the wiſer few, and effectually put a ſtop to the progreſs of uſeful knowledge.

SUCH, in general, were the diſpoſitions of mankind when Sir Francis Bacon came into the world: whom we will not conſider as the founder of a new ſect, but as the great aſſertor of human liberty againſt them all; as one who reſcued reaſon and truth from the ſlavery in

which they had been held till then by each ſect alike. A plauſible hypotheſis, a ſhining theory, are more amuſing to the imagination, and a ſhorter way to fame, than the patient and humble method of experimenting, of purſuing nature thro all her labyrinths by fact and obſervation; no wonder, therefore, that a philoſophy, built on this principle, could not, at firſt, make any ſudden or general revolution in the learned world. But it's progreſs, like that of time, quiet, ſlow and ſure, has in the end been mighty and univerſal. He was not however the firſt among the moderns who ventured to diſſent from Ariſtotle. Ramus, Patricius, Bruno, Severinus, to name no more, had already attacked the authority of that tyrant in learning, who had long reigned as abſolutely over the opinions, as his reſtleſs pupil had of old affected to do over the perſons of men. But theſe writers invented little that was valuable themſelves, however juſtly they might reprehend many things in him. And as to the real improvements made in ſome parts of natural knowledge, before our author appeared, by Gilbert, Harvey, Copernicus, Father Paul, and ſome few others, they are well known, and have been deſervedly celebrated. Yet there was ſtill wanting one great and comprehenſive plan, that might

embrace the almoſt infinite varieties of ſcience, and guide our enquiries aright in all. This Sir Francis Bacon at firſt conceived, in it's utmoſt extent; to his own laſting honor, and to the general utility of mankind. If we ſtand ſurprized at the happy imagination of ſuch a ſyſtem, our ſurprize redoubles upon us when we reflect, that he invented and methodized this ſyſtem, perfected ſo much, and ſketched out ſo much more of it, amidſt the drudgery of buſineſs and the civil tumults of a court. Nature ſeems to have intended him peculiarly for this province, by beſtowing on him with a liberal hand all the qualities requiſite; a fancy voluble and prompt to diſcover the ſimilitudes of things; a judgment ſteady and intent to note their ſubtleſt differences; a love of meditation and enquiry; a patience in doubting; a ſlowneſs and diffidence in affirming; a facility of retracting; a judicious anxiety to plan and diſpoſe. A mind of ſuch a caſt, that neither affected novelty, nor idolized antiquity, that was an enemy to all impoſture, muſt have had a certain congeniality and natural relation to truth *. Theſe characters, which, with a noble confidence, he has applied to himſelf, are obvious and eminent in

* Bacon, Vol. II. p. 264, 265.

his Inſtauration of the Sciences: a work by him deſigned, not as a monument to his own fame, but a perpetual legacy for the common benefit of others. He has divided the whole of it into ſix capital parts: with a ſhort account of which we ſhall cloſe this imperfect relation of his life and writings.

1. The firſt part of this Inſtauration propoſes a general ſurvey of human knowledge: and this he executed in that admirable treatiſe entitled, The Advancement of Learning *. As he intended to raiſe a new and laſting ſtructure of philoſophy, founded not in arbitrary opinions or ſpecious conjectures, but in truth and experience; it was abſolutely neceſſary to his deſign, firſt to review accurately the ſtate of learning as it then ſtood, thro all it's provinces and diviſions. To do this effectually, required, with an uncommon meaſure of knowledge, a diſcernment not only exquiſite but univerſal: the whole intellectual world was ſubjected to it's examination and cenſure. That he might not loſe himſelf on a ſubject ſo vaſt and of ſuch variety; he has, according to the three faculties of the ſoul, memory, fancy, underſtanding, ranged

* De augmentis ſcientiarum.

the numerous train of arts under three great claſſes; hiſtory, poetry, philoſophy. Theſe may be conſidered as the principal trunks from which ſhoot forth, in prodigious diverſity, the leſſer parts and branches of ſcience. Whatever is deficient, erroneous, or ſtill wanting in each, he has pointed out at large; together with the propereſt means for amending the defects, for rectifying the errors, and for ſupplying the omiſſions in all. Upon the whole, he was not only well acquainted with every thing that had been diſcovered in books before his time, and able to pronounce critically on thoſe diſcoveries: he ſaw ſtill farther, and at the end of this treatiſe has marked out, in one general chart, the ſeveral tracks of ſcience that lay ſtill neglected or unknown. And to ſay truth, ſome of the moſt valuable improvements ſince made have grown out of the hints and notices ſcattered thro this work: from which the moderns have ſelected, each according to his fancy, one or more plants to cultivate and bring to perfection.

2. THE deſign of the Novum Organon *, which ſtands as the ſecond part to his Inſtauration, and may

* Novum Organon.

be

be reckoned the moſt conſiderable, was to raiſe and enlarge the powers of the mind, by a more uſeful application of it's reaſoning faculty to all the different objects that philoſophy conſiders. In this place, our Author offers to the world a new and better Logic; calculated not to ſupply arguments for controverſy, but arts for the uſe of mankind: not to triumph over an enemy by the ſophiſtry of diſputation, but to ſubdue nature itſelf by experiment and enquiry. As it differs from the vulgar Logic in it's aim, it varies no leſs from that captious art in the form of demonſtrating: for it generally rejects ſyllogiſm, as an inſtrument rather hurtful than ſerviceable to the inveſtigation of nature, and uſes in it's ſtead a ſevere and genuine induction. Not the trivial method of the ſchools, that, proceeding on a ſimple and ſuperficial enumeration, pronounces at once from a few particulars, expoſed to the danger of contradictory inſtances: but an induction that examines ſcrupulouſly the experiment in queſtion, views it in all poſſible lights, rejects and excludes whatever does not neceſſarily belong to the ſubject; then, and not till then, concluding from the affirmatives leſt. A croud of inſtances might be brought to ſhew how greatly this method

of enquiry has proſpered in the hands of the moderns; and how fruitful it has been of new diſcoveries, unknown and unimagined by antiquity. But I will only mention one that may ſtand in place of many; the Optics of our immortal Newton: where, in a variety of experiments, he has analyzed the nature and properties of light itſelf, of the moſt ſubtile of all bodies, with an accuracy, a preciſion, that could hardly have been expected from examining the groſſeſt and moſt palpable. From whence, by the method of Induction, he has raiſed the nobleſt theory that any age or country can ſhew.

3. It has been the fate of almoſt every conſiderable ſcheme for the good of mankind to be treated, at firſt, as viſionary, or impracticable, merely for being new. This our Author foreſaw, and attempted to obviate, in the third part of his Inſtauration *; by furniſhing materials himſelf towards a natural and experimental hiſtory: a work which he thought ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, that without it the united endeavours of all mankind, in all ages, would be inſufficient to rear and perfect the great ſtructure of the ſciences. He was aware too, that even men of freer

* Phaenomena univerſi.

and

and more extenſive notions, who reliſhed his new Logic, might be deterred from reducing it to practice, by the difficulties they would meet with in experimenting, according to the rules by him preſcribed. He therefore led the way to other enquirers, in his Sylva Sylvarum, or hiſtory of nature: which, however imperfect in many reſpects, ought to be looked upon as extenſive and valuable for that age, when the whole work was to be begun. This collection, which did not appear till after his death, has been generally conſidered as detached from, and independent on his general plan: and therefore his deſign in making and recording theſe experiments, has not been duly attended to by the reader. They are a common repoſitory or ſtore-houſe of materials, not arranged for ornament and ſhow, but thrown looſely together for the ſervice of the philoſopher: who may from thence ſelect ſuch as fit his preſent purpoſe; and with them, by the aid of that Organ or Engine already deſcribed, build up ſome part of an axiomatical philoſophy, which is the crown and completion of this ſyſtem. The phenomena of the univerſe he ranges under three principal diviſions*; the hiſtory of generations, or the production of all ſpecies according to the com-

* Bacon, Vol. II. p. 3.

mon

mon laws of nature; that of preter-generations, or of births deviating from the ſtated rule; and, thirdly, the hiſtory of nature, as confined or aſſiſted, changed or tortured by the art of man: which laſt diſcloſes to us a new face of things, and as it were another world of appearances. The uſe of ſuch a hiſtory he reckons two-fold: either the knowledge of qualities in themſelves; or to ſerve for the firſt matter of a true and uſeful philoſophy. With this view only did our Author make and gather together the miſcellaneous collection I am ſpeaking of. That many particular experiments have been found doubtful or falſe, cannot be wondered at: the whole was then a track of ſcience uncultivated and deſert. If ſeveral conſiderable men, treading in the path he ſtruck out for them, have gone farther and ſurveyed it more exactly than he did, yet to him is the honor of their diſcoveries in a manner due. It was Columbus alone who imagined there might be a new world: and who had the noble boldneſs to go in ſearch of it, thro an ocean unexplored and immenſe. He ſucceeded in the attempt; and led his followers into a ſpacious continent, rich and fruitful. If ſucceeding adventurers have penetrated farther than he into it's ſeveral regions, marked out

and

and diſtinguiſhed them with more accuracy; the reſult of theſe diſcoveries has leſs extended their fame than it has raiſed and enlarged his.

4. After theſe preparations, nothing ſeems wanting but to enter at once on the laſt and moſt exalted kind of philoſophy: but the Author judged, that, in an affair ſo complicated and important, ſome other things ought to precede, partly for inſtruction, and partly for preſent uſe *. He therefore interpoſed a fourth and fifth part: the former of which he named Scala Intellectus, or a ſeries of ſteps by which the underſtanding might regularly aſcend in it's philoſophical reſearches. For this purpoſe, he propoſed examples of enquiry and inveſtigation, agreeable to his own method, in certain ſubjects; ſelecting ſuch eſpecially as are of the moſt noble order, and moſt widely differing from one another; that inſtances of every ſort might not be wanting. The fourth part then was to contain a particular application and illuſtration of the ſecond. In this light we chuſe to conſider the ſix monthly hiſtories which he propoſed to write on ſix principal topics in natural knowledge:

* Scala Intellectus.

namely,

namely, of winds; of life and death; of rarefaction and condenſation; of the three chymical principles, ſalt, ſulphur, mercury; of bodies heavy and light; of ſympathy and antipathy. The firſt three, in the order I have here placed them, he proſecuted at ſome length; and in a manner, that ſhews with what a happy ſagacity he could apply his own rules to the interpretation of nature. The wonder is, that other enquirers, ſince his time, have done ſo little towards perfecting the two firſt mentioned, things of ſo great concern to human ſociety, and to every individual. As to the three laſt, we have only a ſhort introduction to each: death having prevented him from writing any thing on the ſubjects themſelves. Such is our condition here: whoever is capable of planning uſeful and extenſive ſchemes dies always too ſoon for mankind, even in the moſt advanced age.

5. OF the fifth part he has left nothing but the title and ſcheme *. It was indeed to be only a temporary ſtructure, raiſed with ſuch materials as he himſelf had either diſcovered, or tryed, or improved; not

* Anticipationes Philoſ. ſecundæ.

according

according to the due form of genuine induction, but by the ſame common uſe of the underſtanding that others had employed. And this was to remain no longer than till he had raiſed,

6. The ſixth and ſublimeſt part of this grand Inſtauration, to which all the preceding are merely ſubſervient †: a philoſophy purely axiomatical and ſcientific; flowing from that juſt, caſtigated, genuine manner of enquiry, which the author firſt invented and applied. But this he deſpaired of being able to accompliſh: and the Learned of all countries from his days have been only laboring on ſome ſeparate or leſſer parts of this infinite edifice; which, tho impoſſible for mankind ever to compleat, will for ever deſerve their united attention and endeavours to enlarge and improve it.

Such, and ſo unlimited were his views for the univerſal advancement of ſcience; the noble aim to which he directed all his philoſophic labors. What Caeſar ſaid, in complement to Tully, may, with ſtrict juſtice, be applied to him: that it was more glorious to have extended the limits of human wit,

† Philoſophia prima, ſive activa.

than

than to have enlarged the bounds of the roman world. Sir Francis Bacon really did ſo: a truth acknowledged not only by the greateſt private names in Europe, but by all the public ſocieties of it's moſt civilized nations. France, Italy, Germany, Britain, I may add even Ruſſia, have taken him for their leader, and ſubmitted to be governed by his inſtitutions. The empire he has erected in the learned world is as univerſal as the free uſe of reaſon: and One muſt continue, till the Other is no more.

THE END.